

Eastern Kentucky University

Encompass

Online Theses and Dissertations

Student Scholarship

January 2021

A Qualitative Study Exploring Online Teaching At A Rural Community College: How Do Faculty Prepare To Teach Online?

Gwendolyn Davidson
Eastern Kentucky University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://encompass.eku.edu/etd>



Part of the [Higher Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Online and Distance Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Davidson, Gwendolyn, "A Qualitative Study Exploring Online Teaching At A Rural Community College: How Do Faculty Prepare To Teach Online?" (2021). *Online Theses and Dissertations*. 703.
<https://encompass.eku.edu/etd/703>


This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at Encompass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Online Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Encompass. For more information, please contact Linda.Sizemore@eku.edu.


A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT A RURAL
COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?


BY

GWENDOLYN L DAVIDSON

THESIS APPROVED:


Chair, Advisory Committee


Member, Advisory Committee


Member, Advisory Committee


Dean, Graduate School

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Fine Arts degree at Eastern Kentucky University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library. Brief quotations from the documents are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgements of the source is made. Permission for extensive quotation from or reproduction of this document may be granted by my major professor in [his/her] absence, by the Head of Interlibrary Services when, in the opinion of either, the proposed use of the material is for scholarly purposes. Any copying or use of the material in this document for financial gain shall not be allowed without written permission.

Signature:

X Gwendolyn D. Davis

Date: Aug. 6, 2021

A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT A RURAL
COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?

BY

GWENDOLYN L. DAVIDSON

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

2021

© Copyright by GWENDOLYN L. DAVIDSON 2021
All Rights Reserved.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation work to my children and my husband, Charles, who have patiently waited since I started this program in 2014 for me to be finished forever with my homework so we can have fun again. To my mother, she didn't know I was in the program until I was halfway through it for fear I may not finish. My mom has been the constant in my equation. To my sister who always encouraged me to keep going, while she kept me grounded and true to myself. To my dad who passed away during my first semester of dissertation writing. To my work mentor, who always pushed me to do more and be more, Dr. Strong. I would also like to recognize my friend Natasha, who inspires me and has supported me through some of the most challenging times of my life. Of course, I can't forget my special group of people, the Hazard cohort, Paul, David, Diane, and Amanda. I would not have survived without them. To all my friends and family who have supported me along this journey, I sincerely thank you. Lastly, I give special thanks to my supportive team of faculty and staff at ECU, my Dissertation Chair Dr. Ann Burns; she stepped up to save me in my most desperate moment and guided me to finding an extremely supportive and encouraging replacement committee that included Dr. Petrilli and Dr. Hodge. Also, Ms. Boggs who helped me jump through every piece of administrative red tape imaginable. To each of you, I am forever grateful for your support and encouragement.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Introduction	1
Problem Statement	1
Problem Background.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Research Question	5
Definition of Terms	7
Assumptions and Limitations	7
Conclusions	8
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	9
Introduction	9
Training to prepare faculty to teach online.....	10
Quality of Online Instruction.....	16
Technology Challenges in the Online Classroom.....	21
Faculty Perceptions and Experiences Preparing to Teach Online.....	26
Summary.....	31
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	32
Introduction	32
Context	32
Research Design.....	36
Interview Questions.....	36

Participants	37
Data Analysis.....	38
Data Collection.....	39
Conclusion.....	40
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS.....	41
Introduction	41
Summary of Participants	43
Training	46
Quality	49
Technology Challenges.....	52
Faculty Perception and Experiences.....	55
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	58
Faculty Profiles.....	58
Training	59
Quality	60
Technology Challenges.....	60
Faculty Perceptions and Experience.....	61
Implications.....	61
Recommendations	62
Assess Faculty	62
Defined Policies.....	63
Digital Skills and Future Training	63

Instructional Designer	63
Conclusions	64
References	65
Appendix.....	1
Appendix A IRB.....	1
Appendix B Email Recruiting Letter.....	27
Appendix C Interview Questions.....	29
Appendix D Interview Transcripts	31
Appendix E List of Tables	75
Appendix F List of Figures	77

ABSTRACT

Supporting online faculty at the *community college* level to prepare them to *teach online* can be a complex matter. Faculty who are first entering the online teaching environment often start with training to help them prepare to teach online. Supporting faculty who are teaching online means understanding faculty and their needs. The purpose of this study was to answer the question, how do faculty prepare to teach online and the objectives (1) identify the faculty's years of experience teaching both in-person and online, and the different types of training or professional development that faculty have complete to help them prepare to teach online. (2) explore faculty perceptions and experiences of how they prepare to teach online. (3) identify the different types of technology faculty use to teach online. This study was set up as a qualitative exploration, using a phenomenological approach to explore and answer the research question and objectives. Through a series of interviews with ten online faculty members, information and data was collected to learn about faculty's lived experiences preparing to teach online. The results of this study determined that the preparation process is *unique* and individual to each person. Each faculty member has a different perception of what it means to prepare to teach online.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Teaching a college course online may be a natural platform for some faculty; for other faculty, teaching online may present challenges such as the technology and the ability to deliver quality online instruction. As technology continues to change at a furious pace, faculty who teach online may be required to keep up with online teaching trends, tools, policies, and procedures. Dealing with constant change in the world of online education, in addition to traditional faculty duties, makes for a hectic and sometimes overwhelming semester. The faculty is responsible for developing a course for online delivery that can require meetings, planning, and research (Martin et al., 2019b). Sometimes, there is a need to create learning material for the course. Then, there is the need to meet other requirements such as making the courses ADA complainant and the daunting task of going through the quality assurance process to ensure the course is of high quality and meets the college's quality standards. Combined with faculty's traditional job duties such as serving on committees, external and internal service, professional development, advising, and teaching a full load of courses each semester, it leaves little time for faculty to focus on their online teaching skills. This research will explore a rural community college's online faculty experience and how they prepare to teach online.

Problem Statement

Since the inception of online programs, many community college processes have moved to automated online registration processes, financial aid, advising, and even retention efforts that require faculty to have enhanced digital skills to use the various

digital tools (Briggs et al., 2020). As with all technology, the constant updates and changes to software systems, policies, and procedures, faculty work hard to keep up with all the digital tools used in today's digital education frontier. Community colleges on strict budgets may not have the funds that more prominent universities must support their online faculty with training and support for using these digital tools and teaching online. Community college faculty may be required to learn, on their own, the many skills needed to do their job. Skills required to teach online include navigating a learning management system, developing online courses, learning best practices for teaching online, and acquiring the digital skills necessary to implement a variety of learning technologies in their online courses, or learning how to engage online students in communication through email or other online communication platforms. All these digital obstacles can overwhelm faculty and create barriers to successful teaching online Yang and Cornelious (2004).

Community colleges often require new online faculty to complete some online faculty training before teaching online. "As more institutions move to online courses, the need for faculty development for those who have never taught online increases. Faculty will be more successful and increase the chances of a positive learning experience for their students if they are prepared for this new environment both pedagogically and technologically" (Frass & Rucker, 2017, p. 5). Community colleges also offer professional development throughout the semester specific to the digital tools used to teach online. While faculty may be required to complete training, is it enough to prepare them to teach online and juggle the many demands of day-to-day tasks? With seasoned, primarily in-person faculty transitioning from the traditional classroom

to online and newer faculty who may have more experience with the online class format, community colleges find themselves needing to support a wide variety of faculty digital skill sets. Some faculty may have strong digital skills while others struggle with simple tasks such as email, and then some fall anywhere in between (Levy, 2017). This research will explore how faculty at community colleges prepare to teach online.

Problem Background

When deciding how best to support faculty members teaching online, a one size fits all solution to build and develop online faculty provides a general starting point for all faculty. Creating the best online college with the most well-prepared online teaching faculty comes with various challenges and hurdles just as complex and simple as the challenges colleges face in supporting students or any other aspect of the college business model. The fast pace of change in the online world also contributes to the challenges a community college may face. The cycle of training faculty to use new technology is a continuous process (Purcell et al., 2017).

Community colleges on a small budget may find it increasingly hard to support and develop their online faculty and online programs. Building a sustainable system of support for online faculty is increasingly essential. Understanding the level of online teaching skills of the faculty teaching online is critical in determining how to provide the best support system for the variety of online teaching skill sets of all online faculty.

The fact that technologies used for online teaching are constantly evolving and the need for continuous training for online teachers can strain the college and its online faculty. The development of a robust system of support for online faculty is critical to

the success of online programs at any community college; the need for faculty to have strong digital skills that make it easier for them to implement the ever-changing online teaching technologies is also essential. Faculties teaching online need specific digital skills to provide a content-rich learning environment in their online courses. As online teaching technologies continue to evolve and change, even faculty who have strong digital and online teaching skills will struggle to keep up with the new teaching technologies. Poor digital and online teaching skills can lead to a semester of stress and possibly avoidable issues. Proper support for online faculty could lessen or even avoid these issues (Ruoslahti, 2020).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how community college faculty prepare to teach online. This study will be qualitative and will use a phenomenological approach to collect information. Through this study, it is the expectation of the investigator to gain a deeper understanding of faculty's experiences as they prepare to teach online and their perceptions of those experiences. Exploring real experiences of faculty teaching online at the community college level will provide insight into what these faculty members are experiencing as they prepare to teach online each semester. How faculty prepare to teach online each semester is a unique journey for each faculty member. Regardless of their training, experience, or level of technical knowledge, all faculty prepare to teach online differently to some degree.

Understanding how faculty prepare to teach online can be beneficial to those who serve in roles that directly support faculty teaching online. Examining how faculty

prepare to teach online can provide a deeper understanding of the faculty's needs as they prepare to teach online and how best to support them (Perifanou et al., 2021).

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to answer the question, how do faculty prepare to teach online? The study will also seek to meet the following objectives (1) Identify the faculty's years of experience teaching both in-person and online, and the different types of training or professional development that faculty have completed to help them prepare to teach online. (2) Explore faculty perceptions and experiences of how they prepare to teach online. (3) Identify the different types of technology faculty use to teach online.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Determining how community college faculty prepare to teach online will help the supporting distance learning department develop relatable training, policies, and procedures that will be more meaningful and productive to supporting faculty as they prepare to teach online. This research will identify the gaps and better understand how best to prepare community college faculty to teach online.

Understanding the issues that online faculty face in the preparation process will lead to solutions that will improve online instruction's overall quality. Schulte et al. (2012) suggested that the future of online programs depends on the strength of online faculty. The success of the online programs requires continuous growth and a sturdy support system for online faculty.

While colleges need to have processes that prepare faculty to teach online, understanding their online faculty's various perceptions and levels of experience is vital in understanding how best to ensure that faculty are armed with the digital skill and are

prepared to teach online. "Lack of training opportunities and experience with learning and teaching online, as well as beliefs about the ineffectiveness of online learning in comparison with face-to-face learning, play a role in creating feelings of apprehension about teaching online and in fostering a preference for teaching and learning in the classroom" (Sheffield et al., 2015, p. 10). Research literature supports the idea that faculty new to teaching online feel that their readiness to teach online is less than more experienced online faculty. While studies such as Lowenthal et al. (2019) focused on preparing faculty to teach online at universities with large online programs, this study will focus on the faculty teaching online at the community college level.

Determining how faculty prepare to teach online will help online learning departments develop and present training that will be more meaningful and productive to prepping faculty in teaching online. Learning digital skills can be comparable to learning how to solve math problems in that missing a step can often lead to an incorrect solution. This research will identify the gaps in the preparation process of faculty and provide a better overall understanding of how best to prepare faculty to teach online. With a system that supports proper preparation for online faculty, colleges will be able to offer superior online learning to the students attending the community college system. Understanding the issues that online faculty face in the preparation process will lead to solutions that will improve the overall quality of online instruction. "As institutions of higher learning strengthen their infrastructures to accommodate the demand for online courses and programs, urgent needs for trained and properly motivated faculty will emerge. Through proactive measures to train, mentor, evaluate, and remediate online faculty, colleges and universities can limit potential student

problems and complaints" (Schulte et al., p.84). The future of online programs depends on the strength of online faculty. The success of the online program's growth and support of online faculty will be a positive focus for any college as it strives to provide students with a flexible learning option that fits the ever-demanding world they live in today.

Definition of Terms

Learning Management System (LMS): Learning management systems (LMSs), software applications designed for the administration and delivery of online courses, provide a meeting place for richly collaborative communities of learning for distance learning students. They provide a medium for instructors to create a course infrastructure and offer the opportunity for multimodal instruction, such as visual, aural, and text learning prompts, as well as interactive online discussion, coaching, collaboration, reflection, and self-regulated learning Kowalczyk, (2014).

Hybrid Course: A course taught partially in person and partially online through the utilization of a learning management system.

Digital Skills: Skills related to the use of the internet, computer systems, and software used by faculty to develop, manage, and teach online courses.

Assumptions and Limitations

All faculty participating in this research were faculty teaching online, and their area of expertise are varied depending on the discipline they teach. Faculty participating had varying need in terms of preparation to teach online. Limitations of the study included the faculty's bias for or against teaching online. There were some faculty participating in the research that did not have a preparation process or were unaware

that there were things they could do to prepare themselves for teaching online that may have skewed the findings of the research in some way. Faculty with higher levels of digital skills may feel more prepared than those who do not have the same level of online teaching skills meaning each faculty's experience and training may result in a skewed perception overall of how they prepare to teach online.

Conclusions

If the support for faculty teaching online does not address the needs of the faculty to prepare for teaching online, there could be a decrease in the quality of online courses offered, and this will eventually influence student success rates. Enrollment in online courses could also suffer, further affecting the budget negatively. Like a set of dominoes, the impact of how a faculty prepares to teach online each semester could lead to more problems.

For the online faculty members to grow and advance, the need for nurture and support by all within the community college system is perilous. The importance of developing and fostering the online faculty who are teaching online programs is of great importance to the success of both the programs and their students. By exploring the current preparation process of online faculty members and their overall attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to preparing to teach online, the rural community college can begin to understand better how to build an online faculty support system that will meet the needs of online faculty while staying within the constraints and limitations of the college.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

When deciding how best to support faculty members teaching online, a review of past research and literature on the topic offers some guidance on determining how best to gather and analyze the needs of online faculty. There is no one size fits all solution for colleges to build and develop online faculty while also providing a sustainable continuous support system that keeps faculty prepared and online teaching trends. Creating the best online college with the most well-prepared online teaching faculty comes with various challenges and hurdles just as complex and simple as the challenges colleges face in supporting students or any other aspect of the college business model. The fast pace of change in the online world also contributes to the challenges a college with limited funding and staff may face. By the time new technology deploys and faculty trained, there are often new updates to those technologies to take their place, replacing what the faculty has just learned.

For the purpose of this review, the researcher narrowed down the literature to four topics that relate to teaching online to focus on relatable information more efficiently. The researcher made the best effort to limit the sources to more recent years. There are many worthwhile topics of focus on preparing to teach online, which would greatly benefit an online program, faculty, and students; however, narrowing the topics keeps this research focused. Literature found through searching for key terms like teaching online, prepare to teach online, community college teachers online, quality online instruction, professional development faculty, online faculty, & rural community college online, resulted in a wealth of research that for the purposes of this literature

review, will be broadly categorized into one of the four following topics: Training, Quality, Technology Challenges, and Faculty Perceptions.

Much of the literature found about preparing to teach online references the critical process of preparing the faculty through training and professional development programs that provide faculty with a guide of best practices. College faculty generally are not trained to be teachers in graduate school and learn best practices for teaching throughout their careers. Compared to traditional teaching practices, teaching online requires a skill set that is not so easy to implement. Typically, colleges require faculty to complete some type of training to prepare faculty to teach online and ensure that online faculty are oriented to the practices and expectations of the college before they are allowed to teach online. The literature tends to cover the same topics about preparing faculty to teach online. However, each study has a uniqueness to it that is relevant to this research topic and beneficial to this exploration.

Training to prepare faculty to teach online

Training to prepare faculty to teach online can come in many different forms, such as professional development, institutional training, or formal college courses. Past research shows that the standards for preparing to teach online are developed and defined individually by each institution. The professional development framework developed through research by Yang and Cornelious (2004) suggested that quality online teaching requires three levels of support to include support at the organizational level, the community level, and the teaching level. Understanding and meeting the needs of the faculty are important to providing training to faculty in support of their efforts to deliver quality online classes (Aust et al., 2015).

Historically, support from administrators of institutions with online programs has been important, as noted by Yang and Cornelius (2004) which describes that the role of administrators supporting online programs should include administrators as the planner, motivator, promoter, and supporter to ensure that the program is delivering quality online instruction in each online program. Another form of training for faculty is to prepare them to teach online through the use of various training programs. The study by Lane (2013) resulted in the successful hybrid certificate training program that involved the use of on campus workshops, social media community and asking participants to blog about their participation and completing a self-assessment at the end of the program with an incentive to earn a certificate and a digital badge upon successful completion.

Frass and Rucker (2017) conducted a study of how four higher education institutions and their experiences with professional development and faculty preparation to teach online, which reiterated the importance of assessing the needs of the faculty to gauge their current level of preparedness to teach online to assist in planning and development and delivery of training to prepare faculty to teach online. The study conducted by Mohr and Shelton (2017) developed a best practices framework for online faculty professional development using the Delphi Method. The study was limited to experts in the field of preparing faculty to teach online. Four surveys were conducted, resulting in two major themes of online faculty professional development topics and institutional/organization strategies. Online faculty professional development topics included faculty roles, classroom design, learning processes, and understanding legal issues in the online classroom. Institutional/Organization strategies were developed

from the surveys to include supportive campus climate for online learning, institution-specific expectations for online learning, and staffing support that included instructional designers to assist with online course development.

Research from (Baldwin & Trespalacios, 2017) evaluated various tools used to prepare faculty to teach online was based on Chickering and Gamson's (1987) Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education. The tools used in the study are categorized as what could be considered formal training, institution-specific, and online professional development. The results found that no single tool used for training faculty fully met all of Chickering and Gamson's (1987) practice principles. Walters et al. (2017) worked to establish a way to provide faculty development initiative that would support the faculty through all phases of teaching online, from planning to delivery. The starting point for this initiative by Walters et al. (2017) was a ratings-based survey of 314 participants to measure faculty perceptions focused on two topics, instructional learning delivery formats and interest in participating in an online professional learning community. The results of Walters's (2017) survey found that faculty rated most important, reliability of online technology, online accessibility for both faculty and students, and lastly adequacy/reliability of the technical support and the support provided to help design online courses.

Schmidt et al. (2016) study recommended that offering needed professional development at a variety of levels throughout the institution, in small groups with a focus on best practices for teaching online and using technology. Another critical point that is made by Schmidt et al. (2016) was that self-directed learning online is a valuable resource and should be available to faculty who want to learn on their own. The study

by (Báez et al., 2019) was a mixed-methods study that followed online faculty through a training program that put a more realistic spin on it where faculty participants played the role of the student and gave them a newfound perspective that is best taught through experience.

Most educators teaching online have had some type of professional development or have completed some kind of training to prepare to teach online. The professional development or training was usually completed before teaching online or during the first time teaching online. The program at Wisconsin Virtual School required teachers to complete professional development before teaching online, and the survey study reported that the most frequently reported challenges were related to student progress and engagement in the course (Zweig et al., 2015)

It is common practice for colleges to assess faculty before letting them teach online to determine their skill level and ability to prepare to be an online teacher. McGee et al. (2017) reiterated that for faculty to provide effective teaching on a digital platform, it requires faculty to acquire additional skills and knowledge that are advanced and on a higher level than what is required of faculty in the traditional classroom. Each college creates its benchmark for determining faculty readiness to teach online. The format in which faculty preparation to teach online is done differently. Typically, colleges offer different types of preparation for faculty who want to teach online. The training programs vary in format and can be dependent on the background of the faculty member and their previous experience teaching online. There are many different types of training that can be used to prepare faculty to teach online such as workshops, one-on-one assistance, peer assistance, independent study, informal

or formal mentoring, external training, or interval training (Smydra et al., 2018). No matter what it is called, training is the first step to teaching online, and each college does it differently.

Enrolling in a class to learn to teach online is a common method used by institutions to train faculty to prepare to teach online. Sanga (2018) used a mixed research method to analyze a unique online training course that involved 27 online faculty participants. Taking a class to learn to teach online is a common method used by institutions to train faculty to prepare to teach online. The online course is described by Sanga (2018) as beginning with a pre-course survey to identify participants' level of competence in teaching online. The course continued with lessons that taught participants how to develop an online course, organize and create content prior to teaching the course, and at the end of the course, participants were administered a post-survey to gauge their level of learning from start to finish (Sanga, 2018). The first of several key findings in this study stated that participants reported that at the end of the course, they had improved their skills, which allowed them to maintain a constant presence in their online classes; second, the participants felt that they were better able to develop an online course that meets the needs of the students; third, the participants gained important instructional design-based skills that would allow them to maintain and develop their online classes going forward (Sanga, 2018).

Boise State University developed an online training program that focused on three points; Course design, quality assurance, and teacher training (Chen et al., 2017). The program at Boise was a 12-week online course that had two consecutive phases where the first phase focused on design in a group setting and the second phase

focused on development in a one-on-one setting, according to Chen et al. (2017). Over time, the program was condensed into a shorter time frame, and the Quality Matters Peer Review complaint was added to the program, which required faculty to teach their online course for one semester then go through the peer review process using the quality matters rubric with the goal of course improvement (Chen et al., 2017). The finding from Chen et al.'s (2017) research supports the idea that one on one training is more effective, and faculty are trying to complete a training course while carrying out their normal faculty duties are sometimes overwhelmed by the workload.

Assessing faculty after a course is common practice and typically involves the students who just participated in the class completing a course evaluation and providing feedback on various aspects of the class. Feedback from students is critical in assessing the class, and the faculty, Leist, and Travis (2010). Detailed through their research, some distance learning administration reported the use of mid-semester assessments that request feedback from students on instructor proficiency with the online platform as well as other information related to the student such as student performance, computer skills, satisfaction. Other distance learning administrators reported collecting feedback about instructor proficiency and course content (Leist & Travis, 2010).

Although the research of (Leist & Travis, 2010) is a bit dated, it provides a valuable perspective and a historical reminder of what has been learned from these older processes. A mid-semester survey to students may no longer be advisable as not to overwhelm already busy students, and as mid-semester, they may not have had a chance to base an opinion about their teacher. Understanding the performance of faculty and the course through student surveys give administrators an idea of how successful or

unsuccessful the online program is operating and gives administrators a starting point to identify gaps and needs of the online program overall but can also alert administrators to any red flags indicating that faculty may be struggling in the online environment and allow for quick intervention if needed.

Leary et al. (2020) conducted a study of the literature related to various professional development models and their effectiveness. (Leary et al., 2020) found that there was a great deal of focus on the instructors, specifically the instructor's demographics, characteristics, experience, and concerns. Leary also noted that there is a similar focus on the institution and its financial and administrative policies, all of which Leary recommends further research should be conducted.

Quality of Online Instruction

Quality online instruction is an important factor for any online program. Today's distance learning programs have a responsibility to ensure that the online faculty are delivering quality online instruction and their courses are meeting the course curriculum requirements. In terms of quality, providing distance learning courses that are as equal in quality to traditional in-person courses can, in some cases, be a necessity to meet the institution's higher education accreditation standards. Translating a traditional course into a distance learning course can be a cumbersome task, especially for specific courses that require hands-on assessments or labs of a clinical nature (Kowalczyk, 2014).

Defining what constitutes quality online instruction is different for each institution. Measuring quality online instruction can be done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Piña and Bohn (2014) used data related to faculty actions and behaviors

in their online courses, information that was collected from data recorded by the learning management system, to develop a baseline of quantitative measures to determine quality online instruction. These measures included tasks such as login activity, posted contact information, number of announcements posted each week, response times, discussion participation, and assignment feedback.

A qualitative study conducted by Martin et al. (2019b) examined the skills of award-winning faculty through a series of interviews to gain insight as to what makes them award-winning faculty. The result of this study articulated that the award-winning faculty reported technical skills, willingness to learn, knowledge of ‘how people learn,’ content expertise, course design knowledge, and how to assess student learning are the top six competencies that make up an award-winning online faculty. Each participant reported that professional development, in some form, is key to quality online instruction (Martin et al., 2019b).

Course design goes hand in hand with quality. Faculty preparing to teach online will be faced with the task of course design as part of the process of preparing to teach online. Course design can determine the challenges that both faculty and students might face each semester. A well-built course that includes a clearly outlined syllabus, clear communications expectations, and content that has clear instructions for meeting the objectives of the course can lessen the likelihood of challenges throughout the semester (Cross & Polk, 2018). According to Cross and Polk (2018), faculty can overcome the challenges of teaching online with good course design, effective time management of the workload, and using digital tools are key to delivering a quality online course.

In 2007, the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching was developed by experts from the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA) and Quality Matters (QM) organizations and had been used by institutions as a benchmark (Powell et al., 2019). The efforts of Powell et al. (2019) to develop a structure of national standards for teaching online, produced a groundwork of guidance for professional responsibilities, digital pedagogy, community building, learner engagement, digital citizenship, diverse instruction, assessment and measurement, and instructional design. Literature for teaching online in higher education often references the Quality Matters organization and program because its rubrics are a popular choice as they are deemed as the best guides for teaching online (Cross & Polk, 2018). Quality Matters comes with a monetary cost to gain access to the program's full benefits (National Standards for Quality Online Learning, 2021.) Littlefield et al. (2019) presented a variety of other tools for distance learning departments to consider when assessing what types of tools would work best for their institution. Littlefield et al. (2019) discussed several different types of tools used to evaluate quality of online instruction. The tools discussed were the Online learning consortium (OLC) scorecard, which evaluation was based on broad quality standards, the Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPkit) covered planning, developing, and evaluating online programs, the QM rubric which was exclusively focused on course design, and the Blackboard exemplary course program rubric (ECP) which was free to use and was also only focused on course design. Schulte et al.'s (2012) study focused on a response to an online program quality and accountability mandate. Park University developed what is called the online instructor evaluation system (OIES), which includes an instructor self-review and formative

reviews. Schulte et al. (2012) revealed that there were some major weaknesses of this system that include time, standardization, and management of participants. Faculty and administrators have a demanding schedule and implementing a training program adds to their already busy schedules. Gregory et al. (2020) conducted a mixed-methods study with 470 full-time and adjunct faculty members at two colleges, for which the qualitative portion was used to explore participants' experiences and feelings from participants who had completed the training workshop about the rubric made by Quality Matters (QM). Gregory et al.'s (2020) presented several important points being that faculty found the rubric useful, not perfect, rigorous, motivating, and that learning to apply the QM standards was difficult and time-consuming. This research relates to other research that also says teaching online increases faculty workload and presents unique challenges in terms of quality online instruction.

Hostos Community College is an example of an institution that serves an underserved community, and its open admissions policy to its online programs makes it a popular program that has seen much growth (Vasquez-Isca, 2019). Administration at the college recognized the time involved with preparing to teach online and deliver online classes, teaching online had become more desirable by faculty at the college but also brought opposition from some faculty about the quality of online instruction (Vasquez-Isca, 2019). This exploration found that HCC faculty faced many of the same challenges as other online programs. Faculty who wanted to teach online must were required to training and their online course were required go through a quality assurance process that also used the Quality Matters rubric reiterating the popularity of the rubric for quality assurance (Vasquez-Isca, 2019)

Best practices are discussed throughout the literature related to preparing to teach online. Dunlap and Lowenthal (2018), developed a list of recommendations for quality online instruction that was categorized into themes, including supporting student success, providing clarity and relevance through content structure and presentation, establishing a presence in the course, and being better prepared. Each of the themes in the recommendation by Dunlap and Lowenthal (2018) is a crucial part of providing quality online instruction.

Presenting yet another point of quality online instruction, Crews and Wilkinson (2015) looked at how instruction design and delivery and good teaching are connected.

Through an email survey, 556 participants responded to the request (Crews & Wilkinson, 2015). The survey was based on the seven principles of good teaching, and the results indicated that an eighth principle should be considered, and that is professionalism (Crews & Wilkinson, 2015).

According to (Altman et al., 2020), the Continuum of Excellence in Quality Assurance (CEQA) model was developed as a guide for higher education to follow when implementing a quality assurance process in their online programs and conducted a phenomenological study to explore the validity and applicability of the CEQA model when being implemented in higher education online programs. Through a series of interviews, it was discovered that early implementation of a quality assurance process was important to the success of the online program (Altman et al., 2020). The study found that it was important for faculty to accept the quality assurance process early on in the implementation phase to keep the project moving forward and keep the attitudes of faculty positive (Altman et al., 2020). Lastly, the participants reported that their

institution was able to fully implement the QA process or reach the last stage of implementation even after years of working towards implementation (Altman et al., 2020).

Technology Challenges in the Online Classroom

Today's distance learning programs have evolved so rapidly that they face most of the same challenges as traditional programs and even have their own unique set of challenges. Issues such as course quality, instructor attitude, hidden costs, student issues, and use of technology are among the significant challenges distance learning programs face when trying to support online faculty. Faculty teaching online has faced technological challenges since the early days of preparing to teach online (Cejda, 2007). According to Cejda (2007), in the past, internet access was a challenge that was considered a challenge by faculty when preparing the content for their online courses, especially in rural areas where high-speed internet is often not available. When making decisions about what types of online technologies to use in their online classrooms, faculty in rural areas often chose technologies that did not require high-speed internet. Communication is also often a challenge in the online classroom. Meyer (2013) highlighted the disconnect between online faculty and online students and the challenge of building relationships between the online faculty and online students, as well as the use of communication tools which can be an additional technology challenge for faculty.

Similarly, as in Merillat and Scheibmeir's (2016) study, communication in the online classroom is a challenge for online faculty, and that focus should be given to ensuring that all online faculty are fully trained to use the tools available in the Learning

Management System for better communication in the online course. Shea (2019) presented an extensive study conducted through a survey of approximately 100,000 experienced online faculty to better understand the motivation and demotivation for faculty to teaching online. The study found that community college faculty participating in the survey were more likely to report that they were willing to volunteer to teach online than those reporting from a four-year institution. The results also revealed that participants with a perceived higher level of computer skills view teaching online as less of a challenge.

Further evidence that faculty have continually faced challenges preparing to teach online resulted in Hurt's (2006) qualitative study, which used constructivist learning theory as the theoretical framework to conduct two rounds of interviews with online faculty. The results of Hurt's (2006) study found that faculty in rural areas deal with many technical issues in their practice and teaching online requires the mastery of specific digital skills to provide quality online instruction. Hannigan and Gonzalezs (2019), through their research, made recommendations for administrators of online programs to invest in technologies, professional development focused on course design, collect feedback from students about their experiences with online programs, review program outcomes, and create a community for faculty to share resources for teaching online. The research also produced recommendations for faculty related to preparing to teach online. That recommendation was for faculty to participate in training that teaches them to use online tools and course design.

Digital skills and changes in technology have presented hurdles for online faculty each semester. Understanding the competencies of online faculty is important

when determining how best to support them—much of the research related to teaching online touches base on types of technologies used. Similarly, in Sheffield et al. (2015) quantitative study, participants reported that the technologies they use regularly include internet surfing, social media, email, texting, course related LMS use, research online, and document processing software. Sheffield et al.'s (2015) study included surveys of those participants who completed a lecture from an instructional designer and participated in an online facilitation exercise that required participants to design a mini course to give participants real experience and encourage participants to recognize when they should reach out for help creating a course. While there is a wealth of literature about faculty preparation, other research is more specific to the different roles and duties online faculty must fulfill to be successful online teachers.

Faculty at all institutions across the world faced a historical challenge with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. Teachers who had never taught online were forced to prepare and move their courses to an online format due to government policies that closed nearly all institutions due to the widespread cases of the deadly Covid-19 virus that triggered the pandemic. Participatory action research by Safta-Zecheria et al. (2020) addressed the challenge that teachers faced with moving their in-person classes to the emergency online format. Safta-Zecheria et al. (2020) began offering support to faculty by creating an impromptu tutoring service which led to participants being invited to participate in documenting their experiences anonymously using Google forms then to participate in both semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The results of the study found that the greatest challenges during this time were access to

technological and digital infrastructures and the development of digital competencies of teachers, pupils, and parents (Safta-Zecheria et al., 2020).

Additional research focused on the transition from a university classroom to online during the Covid-19 pandemic was conducted by Ruoslahti (2020). In a qualitative study, where twelve teachers participated by writing about their experience of moving from the in-person classroom to an online platform, participants stated having at least some prior experience teaching online, and their level of preparation made the transition easier (Ruoslahti, 2020). With limited technical support while working off-campus during the pandemic, participants reported challenges with technology such as third-party communication tools, lack of spontaneous contact with coworkers, increased workload due to the challenges, increased stress levels, and lack of feedback from students (Ruoslahti, 2020),

The Covid-19 pandemic caused a need for faculty to quickly learn how to translate their lessons into the online format in this emergency situation. For programs that require clinical or hands-on lessons, translating those skills online is a bit more difficult. Dohle et al. (2021) report that in response to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, many practical and skills lessons that are normally taught in-person were developed into video tutorials, also referred to as e-tutorials in this research. The results of the study by Dohle et al. (2021) indicated that there was a high acceptance rate among the student participants evaluated.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought to light that across the globe, there was a need for faculty teaching online to have strong digital skills to deliver online courses as well as communicate and connect with students. In an online questionnaire with 806

participants that were asked to score their responses to questions about digital skills on a scale of 1-5, with five being the highest, results found that faculty did not score very high (4 or higher) based on their own perceptions (Perifanou et al., 2021). Teachers reported using digital tools for daily teaching and student interaction, but the majority rarely used digital tools for activities such as feedback to students, evaluations, or educational course material revisions, while almost 75% of the participants reported using no digital tools at all.

Bourelle (2016) presented the idea of team teaching through a program at the University of New Mexico called Ecomap, which involved graduate assistants co-teaching with faculty to prepare the graduate assistant to one day teach their own online classes. One of the lessons learned by the graduate assistant was that there was a need to develop lessons using audio and video technologies which would have require more training for the graduate assistant. Bourelle's (2016) work further supported the need to provide faculty with training to use technologies for communicating visually and audibly to have the skills to produce quality videos to use in the online classes. Creating and sharing videos involves many technical skills as there are many technical and legal components involved with creating multimedia for course content.

Chen et al. (2017) discussed the argument that faculty are subject matter experts and not technology experts; however, the institution in this research concurs that faculty teaching online should have a basic level of technical skills. Chen et al.'s (2017) noted that faculty do not always understand what it means to have a basic level of technical skills, which causes more challenges for those faculty as they try to move into the online realm.

Faculty Perceptions and Experiences Preparing to Teach Online

While colleges usually have processes and training that prepare faculty to teach online, understanding their online faculty's various perceptions and levels of experience is vital in understanding how best to ensure that faculty are armed with the knowledge and skill they need and are prepared to teach online. Literature related to faculty perception and experience is often embedded or included as a segment of broader research that is focused on determining how faculty feel about teaching online, the challenges they face, the skills faculty perceive to be important to help them with teaching online or their real-life experiences. The culture and community for teaching online crafted at any higher education institution are influential to faculty perceptions. Faculty reported that they felt a lack of administrative support, organizational culture issues related to resistance to teaching online by other faculty and limited financial support for the tools needed by faculty to teach online were all barriers to delivering and teaching online (Kowalczyk, 2014).

Much has changed since earlier research and faculty acceptance, and support for online has shifted to being a more normal part of learning in higher education. Sheffield et al.'s, (2015) research related to the number of training opportunities, experience teaching online, and faculty attitudes about online learning all contribute to the hesitancy for faculty to embrace teaching online. The literature supported the idea that faculty new to teaching online will not feel as though they are as ready to teach online as more experienced online faculty might be. Martin et al. (2019a) recognized a lack of research related to faculty readiness to teach online. This research produced a

survey to collect data and compare faculty attitudes with faculty's ability and readiness to teach online.

The study Martin et al., (2019a) reported that faculty perception of their skill ability was slightly different than their actual skill when it came to their ability to actually do course design, use course communication tools, implement time management, and apply technical skills. Martin et al. (2019a) also found that faculty with less online teaching experience would have a lower perception of their own ability to teach online than those with more years of online teaching experience. The results of the study by Martin et al. (2019a) reported that while all both rated high numbers, faculty perception was slightly different than faculty's ability in each of the skill areas of course design, course communication, time management, and technical skills.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, faculty were forced to move their courses online. Studies like the one conducted by Horvitz et al. (2015), participants reported that they did not feel pressure from their institution to teach online. Horvitz et al.'s (2015) findings concluded that faculty reported self-efficacy in other areas related to teaching online such as instructional strategies, classroom management, use of computers, and student engagement. Horvitz et al. (2015) recommends that future research focus on how institutions train and support faculty, mainly focusing on current practices. Findings from Frazer et al. (2017) suggested that perceptions gathered from faculty with more experience teaching online provide a more in-depth insight into their practice of teaching online. (Badia et al., 2017) conducted a study of a fully online university to explore factors that influenced online teaching. Participants in Badia et al.'s (2017) study provided information to be measured, such as each participant's

educational & academic background, experience teaching online, and participants perceived roles & approaches to teaching online. Ultimately, Badia et al.'s (2017) concluded that faculty teaching online concentrates on various roles that they play, and their focus is on how they approach teaching online.

Faculty experiences reported in Schulte et al.'s (2012) study concluded that faculty new to teaching online appreciated the training that guided them to preparing to teach online while more experienced faculty found the experience of required training to be somewhat skeptical of being evaluated and how the information would be reported to their department. Bloomberg (2020) presented a qualitative case study conducted to assess participants' perception of their experiences in the online faculty coaching program at Northcentral University (NCU) through an online interview/survey that participants were asked to complete and return to the researcher. Bloomberg (2020) found that faculty perceptions included appreciation for the opportunities to continuously learn and improve their online teaching skills. Faculty reported perceived value in the coaching program as it allowed them to better serve students and faculty felt that the personalized support equated to being a successful online instructor with an enhanced toolbox for teaching online (Bloomberg, (2020). As discussed by Albrahim (2020), teaching online placed a high demand on faculty members and can impact their experiences and perceptions of teaching online. Ensuring that faculty have the skills that provide them with the qualifications to teach online will help to feel more prepared and lessen the challenges they will face during the semester. Albrahim (2020) also suggested that faculty have a high expectation of themselves to learn the varied required

competence and fill the various roles of online faculty and perform the tasks necessary to be prepared to teach online.

Attitudes about teaching online affect faculty's desire to learn and participate in faculty development. Wingo et al. (2017) conducted extensive research based on a revised version of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and applied it to prior research related to teaching online to explore faculty acceptance of new technologies used for teaching online. Wingo et al.'s (2017) study uncovered important perceptions among faculty teaching online such as technical support needs, self-awareness of faculty's own online persona, and workload online. Research shows that when faculty feel that their efforts to improve their online teaching skills are not important to administration and faculty might be less likely to engage in professional development that is meaningful.

According to Wynants and Dennis' (2018) study, half of the participants reported that they felt that the administration should find a way to provide a monetary incentive in exchange for the additional time spent by faculty completing professional development. With increased demand to prepare to teach online, it would only make sense that there would be an increase in workload. Luongo's (2018) study found that there was a need for future research to explore online faculty's self-perceived barriers and further supports that professional development is important to faculty and that faculty desire clear guidance for teaching online. More importantly, one of the key findings in Luongo's (2018) study was that a majority of faculty participants perceived teaching online to have a higher workload than when the same class was taught in a traditional classroom.

Kibaru (2018) conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with participants who were asked to provide a detailed account of what they perceived to be the challenges that faculty face related to the design and delivery of online courses. The results of Kibaru's (2018) study provide valuable information about the top three themes and attributes of the participant's perceptions. Three significant challenges or themes came out of the study (Kibaru, 2018). The first significant theme of Kibaru's (2018) study was the lack of physical proximity to learners, which prevented faculty from understanding the learners. The second significant theme of Kibaru's (2018) study presented that the teaching load was a major challenge and faculty perceived teaching online to require more time and perceived that the larger number of students in the online classes had a negative impact overall. Lastly, faculty support was stated as a challenge perceived by faculty (Kibaru, 2018). Faculty reported that teaching online requires a high level of support in course design, use of the learning management system, keeping up with technology, information sharing, and funding to acquire new technologies (Kibaru, 2018).

There is much to learn from faculty experiences. Archibald and Barnes (2017) reflected on faculty experiences teaching online, which found that while it was pushing faculty out of their comfort zone, the push was necessary for growth and development. Archibald and Barnes (2017) found three main themes that evolved from the faculty experiences as important factors that support successfully teaching online and that is timely interactions to keep the students engaged, intentional motivation to keep the students motivated, and spiritual sensitivity for the balance of all things in and out of the online classroom.

Summary

In summary, the literature about preparing to teach online is spread across themes that include topics such as training, quality, technology and its challenges, and faculty perceptions & experiences. The struggles of keeping up with technology and the challenges faculty face when trying to learn and implement new technologies is a common occurrence in the literature. There is a vast amount of literature available about training faculty to teach online. The focus of the research about training is usually related to using the digital tools to develop and deliver an online class. Literature and research about time management, the workload, and other real-life processes faculty use to prepare to teach online each semester is limited. Quality of online instruction and course development is a topic that has been deeply researched and is widely available resource. Research and discussion about faculty perceptions and experiences is vastly available however the experiences of how faculty actually prepare to teach online and the real-life processes that they adopt and use each semester to prepare to teach online are limited in the literature.

There is a notable difference in the greater amount of literature available from studies conducted at universities than there is literature about studies conducted at community colleges. Often the literature touches on multiple topics as they often relate to one another. It is worth noting that it is rare for current research to address the health and wellbeing of faculty teaching online and how those factors impact the preparedness or success of online programs.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research will be qualitative and conducted in the form of exploration interviews, similar to the study conducted at California State in 2018, where ten faculty members shared their experiences related to a particular program, they had each participated in (Wynants & Dennis, 2018).

Context

Rural Community College (RCC), nestled in the Eastern Kentucky mountains, approximately one curvy hour west from the Virginia border and a little less curvy hour from any major Interstate. All roads leading into RCC go up and down, side to side, eventually winding into the small town, to RCC's main campus located just off the two-lane highway that runs through it. According to the college website, RCC serves the county in which it resides and surrounding counties. All of the RCC service areas are considered rural populations. RCC offers associate degrees, diplomas, and certificate programs to its students. RCC students often complete their credentials and find employment or transfer to another four-year college or university to finish their education.

RCC has three main campuses with two extension campuses that offer courses. Each of the campuses has various levels of high-speed internet connections and, at the very least, a small computer lab available for student and teacher needs. Each campus houses a variety of educational programs. For example, one campus is home to the RCC School of Music, while the School of Craft is located at another Campus. Every RCC campus offers some type of online course. Most faculty have implemented an

online component to their traditional in-person classes, making them hybrid courses. Hybrid courses require faculty to meet with students in person once a week and use the learning management system (LMS) to deliver digital content, check grades or read the course syllabus. The extension campus locations do not have fast internet speed compared to the main campus. The slow internet speed makes for another hurdle for faculty who want to teach online and are required to work from these locations.

The researcher, employed at RCC for approximately ten years, began her role at the college as an online course developer and was an associate professor at the time of conducting the research. The researcher was also an online teacher and served in a supportive role to other online faculty. Through observation, the researcher saw the need for more focus and support for online faculty in all areas related to RCC's online programs. Among other state community college campuses, RCC had always strived to be one of the leading online community colleges throughout the state system, made up of 16 colleges, each with its own online programs, support systems, and policies. Therefore, understanding how faculty prepare to teach online at RCC is critical to building a sustainable system that supports online faculty's digital skill growth and the online programs. Most importantly, understanding how to best support faculty as they prepare to teach online each semester.

In-person traditional classes were the foundational course delivery format of RCC. In the past, there was a great deal of resistance by faculty and administration, where acceptance of online courses and programs was not the popular opinion. However, with a growing number of online classes offered each semester on the college's schedule, it is evident that enrollment in online classes is also growing. With

the growth in online offerings and enrollment, the amount of support for a growing system will also need to change and evolve. Online programs at RCC are essential to the success of the college, and support for the online faculty is vital to the organization.

The administration and staff at RCC were supportive of online growth and development. However, constant changes and challenges in the learning environment at the college made it critical for those in the distance learning department to understand the faculty's needs. Understanding faculty needs would allow the distance learning department to support and foster the continued growth of the college's online faculty and online programs.

The Distance Learning Department at RCC, which supported online programs and faculty, consisted of the Dean of Distance Learning and one part-time Instructional Designer. These two members of the Distance Learning Department supported all online faculty and programs. Administrative and staffing changes continued to be a challenge for the department's workload. The pandemic brought many challenges when all faculty had to move to the online teaching platform. Growth in the number of online programs and changes at the college, the support from the Distance Learning Department was spread thin. Departmental changes and new initiatives at RCC were also sometimes a challenge to the distance learning staff workload. This shift impacted the support for online faculty and programs.

The Instructional Designer filled many roles, including the quality assurance coordinator, content developer, technical support for online faculty, and had several other functions supporting distance learning in different ways. With such a small

department, supporting a growing population of online faculty became increasingly demanding. As a result, faculty often sought out the seasoned online faculty for help.

With the continued growth of the number of online faculty, the Distance Learning Department needed to meet the training needs of online faculty. Understanding how faculty prepare to teach online would help the distance-learning department provide a more focused support system that would meet the needs of the online faculty.

The RCC institution overall had an attitude of tolerance towards online programs and online faculty. Most employees within the organization accepted that online was a part of how the college delivered classes to its students. However, the college had undergone significant administrative changes in the past few years, and the distance learning department particularly faced challenges related to teaching online during these years.

Policies and procedures affecting online faculty and online programs were constantly changing. These changes caused hurdles for faculty members and various departments at the college, which caused issues for the distance learning department when supporting online faculty.

Student issues in online classes were as common in the online classroom as they were in traditional classrooms. However, student success in an online program depended on the college and faculty's ability to support them throughout the semester. Therefore, administrators needed to understand how they could best support faculty as they worked to support student success in the online classroom?

The college launched initiatives in the academic year 2018-2019 to support increased student engagement in online courses, student success, course completion, and battle retention rates. These initiatives involve the use of new digital tools and software. Implementing new tools for online faculty requires basic training on how to use the tool. Supporting faculty to be successful in using the new tool was another challenge for the distance-learning department when faculty had various levels of digital skills. The distance-learning department was left to make assumptions about how faculty would be able to understand the training. Varying levels of understanding lead to wasted time and efforts of the already busy distance-learning department, thus making the need to know how faculty prepare to teach online all more important.

Research Design

The design of this research focuses on Rural Community College faculty members who taught online. Through a phenomenological study, consisting of a series of interviews with online faculty members, the researcher expected to explore faculty teaching experiences online. The researcher planned to evaluate the faculty's perceptions and experiences to answer how faculty at a rural community college prepare to teach online?

Interview Questions

Through the interview process, the researcher hopes to answer the following questions:

1. What are the faculty's background and experience in teaching online?
2. What kind of training have faculty completed to prepare them to teach online?
3. Do faculty feel they are prepared with the digital skills to teach online?

4. What is the faculty's current preparation process for teaching online?
5. Do faculty feel that their current preparation process for teaching online needs improvement?
6. Do faculty feel that their preparation process allows them to deliver quality online instruction in their online courses?
7. What skills, training, or resources do faculty feel would help them be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participants

This research will use a nonprobability sampling method for the exploration of how faculty prepare to teach online. Having encompassed a full range of faculty perspectives, the researcher will draw a minimum, purposeful sample of 8 participants. The sample will include two participants teaching online in each of the four different disciplines taught at the community college (Humanities (11 Faculty), Health & Human Services (20 Faculty), Innovation & Educational Technology (6 Faculty), and Science (19 Faculty)). The expectation was to collect a purposeful sampling from each discipline to include faculty experienced in teaching online with five or more years of experience and those with less than five years of experience. This goal was to obtain a sample that is representative of all faculty teaching online at the community college.

The community college website publicly lists faculty by discipline, including the name and contact information for each faculty. In addition, the schedule is posted to the community college website list all of the classes offered online. Using data provided

online, the researcher will select all faculty listed as teaching online for the Fall 2020 semester and invite them by email to participate in the study.

Data Analysis

Once all interviews are complete, the researcher will review and develop an analysis of the responses received from the participants to find similarities and differences in the responses. Interview transcripts were edited by the researcher and included in the final document. Field notes, images, other data collected during the interviews, or any personally identifiable information that might jeopardize the participants' privacy were purposely omitted. The researcher used the data to compare and contrast the different experiences and preparation processes presented in the final research results.

"Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the "bottom-up" by organizing the data inductively into increasingly more abstract units of information. This inductive process involves researchers working back and forth between the themes and the database until they establish a comprehensive set of themes. It may also involve collaborating with the participants interactively so that they have a chance to shape the themes or abstractions that emerge from the process. Researchers also use deductive thinking in that they build themes that are constantly being checked against the data. The inductive-deductive logic process means that the qualitative researcher uses complex reasoning skills throughout the process of research" (Creswell, 2007 p. 45).

The data analysis of the results was crucial in helping the researcher understand the faculty's experiences and preparation processes that they have acquired in their experience teaching online. The final analysis will formulate recommendations for the

possible development of future online faculty preparation programs and future research to expand upon the findings of this research.

Data Collection

The researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews using a predetermined set of semi-structured yet flexible and exploratory questions. To protect the identity and privacy of the participants, real names were not in the research. However, each participant was given a participant number. For example, Participant #1 represented the first interview participant.

Participants were interviewed by phone and asked a series of questions about their experiences and perceptions about how they prepare to teach online. Before the interview starts, participants were asked if they agree to have the interview recorded (audio only). If participants agreed, the interview was recorded with a digital audio recorder. For participants who didn't want to have the interview recorded, the researcher took notes with paper and pen during the interview.

After each interview concludes, the researcher will review and transcribe the interview. Once all interviews are complete and the data collected has been transcribed, the researcher will use the information to conduct data analysis synthesize the information to answer the research question. The researcher will analyze the data collected using an interpretive phenomenological approach. The goal was to determine if there were relatable categories or themes in the perceptions and experiences of how faculty prepare to teach online, what was learned from this collection of data, and how the data would be used in the future to improve support for community college faculty as they prepare to teach online each semester.

Conclusion

This basic qualitative research and collection of data provided the researcher with a wealth of insightful information to be analyzed and developed into meaningful information. The information assisted in understanding the faculty preparation process better. A better understanding of how online faculty prepare to teach online could improve processes and support for preparing faculty to teach online. Overall, this research will provide valuable wisdom into the faculty preparation process and the issues faculty face as they continue to navigate evolution in the world of online teaching.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of faculty and how they prepare to teach online at a rural community college. The study allowed faculty to share their real-life experiences and perceptions. The disparity in the research and literature related to the lived experiences of how faculty prepare to teach online at rural community colleges was the influence behind the researcher's decision to investigate this phenomenon. The study was formulated using a qualitative structure. Data collection and analysis was accomplished using phenomenological research methods. The results are the varied opinions, experiences, and perspectives of the faculty's lived experiences and perceptions of preparing to teach online at a rural community college. To study and answer the research question, the researcher developed the framework based on common phenomenological research procedures. This chapter contains the results of the study and answers the main research question, how do faculty prepare to teach online, and four sub-questions.

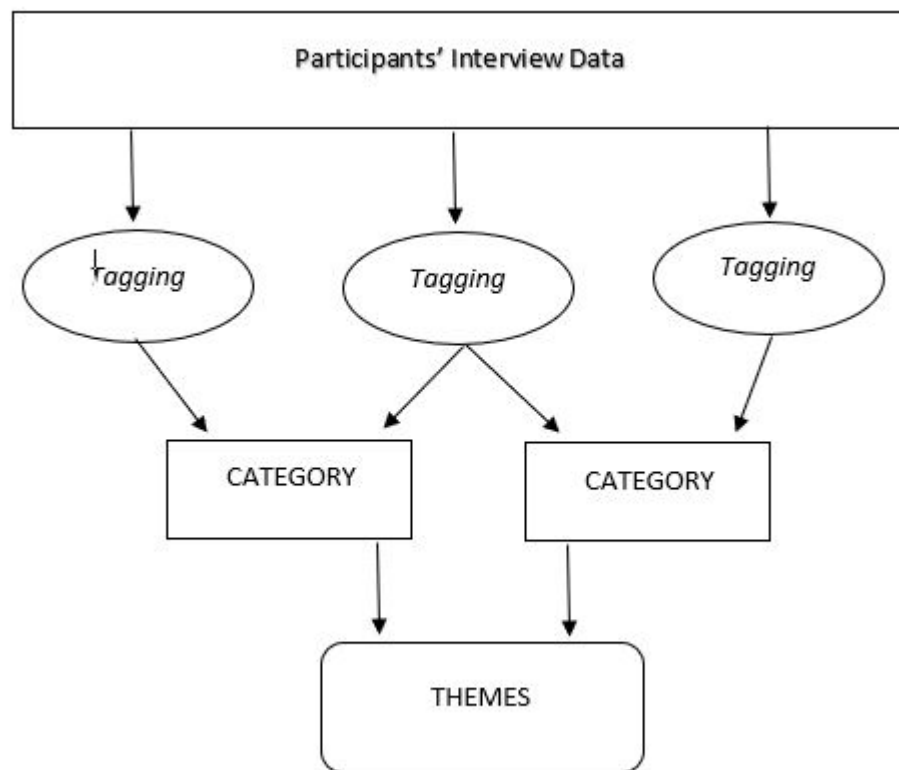
1. What kind of training do faculty complete before teaching online?
2. How do faculty define and deliver quality online instruction?
3. What are the technology challenges faculty face preparing to teach online?
4. What are the lived experiences and perceptions of faculty preparing to teach online?

The research question and objectives helped form the interview questions (Appendix C) used to conduct the interviews. The interview process allowed faculty the opportunity to provide deep narratives of their experiences and perceptions of how they

prepare to teach online. Interview transcripts (Appendix D) were carefully analyzed and reviewed to identify patterns and commonalities among responses. Each transcript was read multiple times, and through content analysis, categorization, and tagging, themes were formed. This chapter will begin by presenting the results of the participating faculty and the four themes established among the faculty perceptions and experiences.

Figure 1

Data Analysis Framework



Four categories were developed from this study, including (1) training, (2) quality, (3) technology challenges (4) experiences and perceptions. These four categories led to the development of five major themes concluded to be the results of this study: (1) training to prepare to teach online was different for each faculty member

(2) processes adopted by faculty to prepare to teach online are focused on preparing the online course (3) faculty's definition of quality online instruction and their perception of skills needed to prepare to deliver quality online instruction is unique to each faculty (4) being able to create videos and use communication tools are perceived by faculty as the most significant technology challenges that impact their preparedness to teach online. Finally, (5) most faculty perceived their least prepared experience was their first time teaching online. These five themes echoed throughout the narratives of the participant's interviews.

Summary of Participants

Ten faculty members voluntarily shared their experiences as part of this study to help the researcher gain deeper insights into the following: types of training faculty have completed, how faculty define quality, the technology challenges faculty face, and the lived experiences of how faculty prepare to teach online. Faculty received and responded to the recruiting email (Appendix B), at which point the interview was scheduled. The interviews with participants occurred over 4 weeks. The researcher did not collect the age or gender demographics of participants to protect each participant's anonymity. The schedule of interviews included at least two faculty from each discipline. Four participants were online teachers in the Health & Human Services disciplines, two were online teachers in the Humanities disciplines, two were online teachers in the Innovation & Education Technology disciplines, and two were online teachers in the Science disciplines. Each interview began with a brief explanation of the study, and then the interview moved on to the first question. The first question in

each interview asked faculty to describe their background and experience teaching online.

Table 1 gives a brief demographic of participants in the study. The table includes the participant's assigned number and represents the order in which the interviews were conducted, the online teaching discipline, and the number of years of experience teaching online. Half of the faculty participants reported having more than five years of experience, while the other half reported having less than five years of experience teaching online.

Table 1
Participants Profile

Participant Number	Online Teaching Discipline	Experience Teaching Online
02	Health & Human Services	More than five years
03	Health & Human Services	More than five years
07	Health & Human Services	Less than five years
10	Health & Human Services	Less than five years
01	Humanities	Less than five years
08	Humanities	Less than five years
05	Innovation & Educational Technology	Less than five years
06	Innovation & Educational Technology	More than five years
04	Science	More than five years
09	Science	More than five years

Participant 01 had been teaching Humanities online for about five years and teaching online every semester since the first-time teaching.

Participant 02 had been teaching Health & Human Services online for about six years and has taught online since their first-time teaching.

Participant 03 began teaching Health & Human Services in the traditional classroom and transitioned slowly to teaching online approximately twelve years ago.

Participant 03 had experience working with older Learning Management System (LMS) technologies such as Web CT, Angel, and Blackboard.

Participant 04 reported that they had been teaching Science online for 18 years but gave no more details about their experiences teaching online over the years.

Participant 05 had been teaching Innovation & Educational Technology online since they started teaching approximately three years ago and had experience developing curriculum for their program and delivering the classes 100% online.

Participant 06 reported that they had been teaching Innovation & Educational Technology online since the late 1990's or approximately 23 years. Participant 06 had experience similar to Participant 03, working with older LMS such as Web CT, Angel, Moodle, Canvas and Blackboard.

Participant 07 shared that they had been teaching online for approximately eight months at the community college. Participant 07 also shared that they had a background as a professional trainer in the corporate world. Participant 07 explained that their experience teaching online in the educational domain was much different than teaching or training in the corporate world. Participant 07 expressed a positive attitude toward teaching online.

Participant 08 had been teaching Humanities online since they started teaching approximately four years ago as an online adjunct teaching one class a semester.

Participant 08 explained that they had been teaching full time online for the past year.

Participant 09 had been teaching Science online for approximately two years. Participant 09 explained that they had a long history and background using computers and technology and had the experience of being an online student.

Participant 10 had been teaching Health & Human Services online for four years and provided no further insight into their experience or background.

Training

Theme 1: Training to Prepare to Teach Online has been Different for each Faculty Member

Faculty were asked what kind of formal training they had completed to prepare them to teach online. Most faculty reported that they had some type of training, either the training provided by the institution, webinars, professional development, or formal training. Formal training refers to training where the faculty member received some type of credit or degree credential for the completed training. Three out of the ten participating faculty reported that they had no type of training to prepare them to teach online before teaching their first online class. Others described their movement as follows:

Participant 01: When I first started, they had us complete some kind of online training, and it was actually very difficult training.

Participant 02: I took the certification that was provided to me, a course made by the college.

Participant 03: At the Community College, we do a lot of professional development training. We have academies that we go to that help us know what would make a quality online course. I've taken classes with other universities to see how they teach their online courses to see what they incorporate.

Participant 05: I am currently taking a course geared toward teaching online. I had PD sessions offered by the college, and they were somewhat helpful.

Participant 07: Training sessions and professional development available for use at the Community College. I have read a couple of books pertaining to online learning. Specifically, since starting to teach online, so that's been a relatively short period, a couple of books about online teaching how to create effective online learning environments. And of course, you know, taking some feedback that you get from students about what they like, what they don't like.

Participant 08: I am currently part of a new faculty teaching institute, and I also went through an online teaching certification in the very beginning.

Participant 09: Trial by fire. Especially in the beginning, there weren't a lot of resources for teaching online, and we have a lot of examples and resources now.

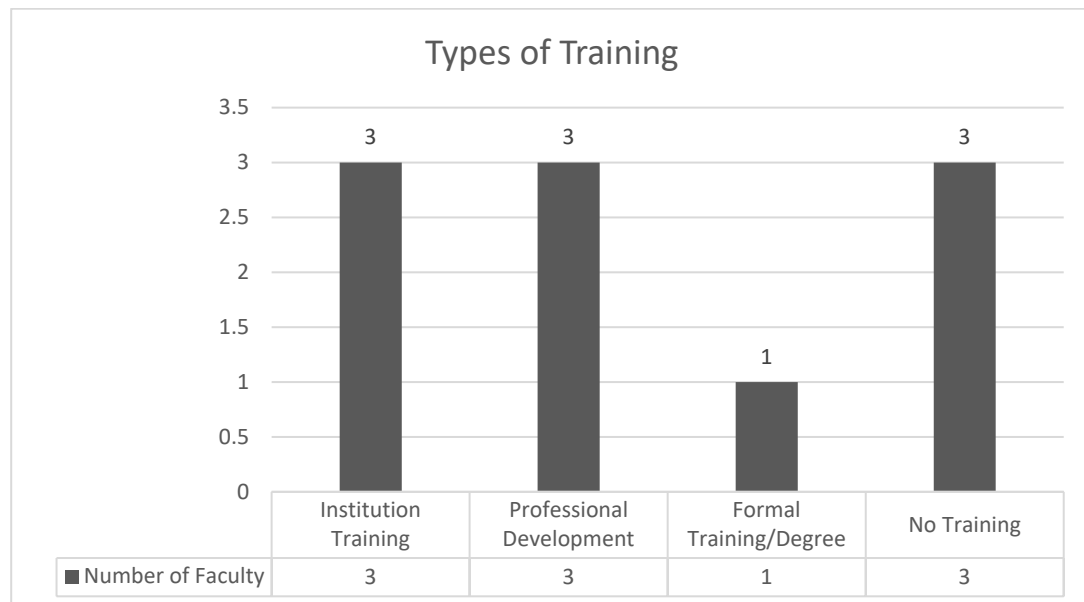
I also go to conferences when and I attend free webinars. The most formal training that I had about how to teach online or what to do was through a book publisher teaching me how to use their content in my class.

Faculty report that they completed various types of training to help them prepare to teach online. The experiences of the faculty were all unique in that they each have completed different trainings before teaching online. Faculty also reported taking additional steps, on their own, to learn more about teaching online such as reading books, attending conferences, and finding specific professional development related to teaching online.

In Figure2, based on responses, the faculty were placed into a category according to the types of training they reported completing for a visual representation of the faculty reported training.

Figure 2

Types of Training



Theme 2: Process adopted by faculty to prepare to teach online are focused on preparing the online course

Through various training and experiences of faculty, as they work each semester to prepare to teach online, adopt their own process that they use each semester to help them prepare to teach online that they use each semester. Therefore, each participating faculty were asked if they had adopted or implemented any process(es) to prepare to teach online. The purpose of this question was to gain an understanding of the faculty's experiences in preparing to teach online and to establish if the faculty used or have developed any process(es), any time before the semester starts, to prepare to teach online as shown in Figure 3.

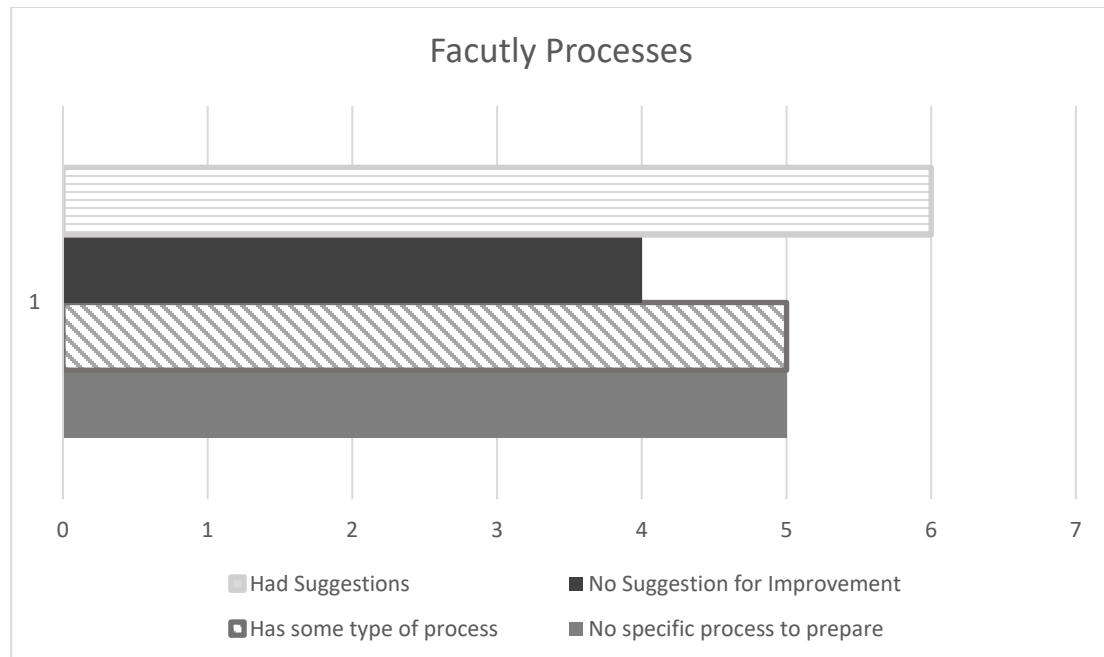
The responses indicated that half of the faculty reported that they have indeed implemented processes to prepare to teach online. Half of the faculty had not implemented any processes to prepare to teach online. The majority of faculty reported that they review all online classes to either create a blueprint for the upcoming semester, create a time management plan for the upcoming semester, or ensure that their courses meet the competencies. One faculty member reported using a checklist to prepare courses. Another faculty reported that their process for preparing to teach online starts weeks or more before the semester starts.

Most faculty who had no specific process to report also had no suggestions to improve their processes but reported that they would like to see how others teach online or have a mentor program that supports learning to teach online. One faculty member felt that even though they didn't have suggestions, there is always for improvement. The two repetitive key suggestions from faculty for process improvement were a mentor program to see and learn from other faculty and a to-do list for faculty to follow each semester to help ensure they have completed important tasks in preparing to teach

online each semester. The mentor program was suggested by both a faculty who had reported specific processes and a faculty who did not. Other suggestions included improving course content and incentive or compensation for preparing online courses.

Figure 3:

Faculty Processes and Suggestions for Improvement



Quality

Theme 3: Faculty's definition of quality online instruction and their perception of skills needed to prepare to deliver quality online instruction is unique to each individual.

To further explore and better understand faculty perceptions of quality online instruction, faculty were asked to define quality online instruction and then asked if they feel that they are prepared to deliver quality online courses that meet their definition of quality online instruction. Student engagement and meeting the course goals were the two keywords resulting from the responses when faculty were asked to define quality

online instructions. Other faculty responses included course design, success rates, and good communication. Several faculties found it difficult to define quality online instructions. One faculty simply stated that they could not define quality online instruction. Another faculty responded that the definition of quality online instruction depends on the class and requires flexibility. None of the participants mentioned using a Quality Management rubric such as that referenced in the study by (Powell et al. 2019).

Participants who defined quality online instruction as follows:

Participant 01: I think that quality online instruction is really about having the content that the students need to be delivered in a manner that is helpful. It is delivered in a way where each student is able to learn the material, so you have different types of resources there available, like maybe lecture PowerPoint. You know you have things like reading visual, different methods, and ways to contact the student to be able to help them learn the way that they like to learn. I think that it has to be organized well.

Participant 02: Well, one of the things is to make sure that you are meeting all of the goals that the class is supposed to reach.

Participant 03: I think quality online instruction is not a one-shoe-fits-all. It depends on the class. It actually depends on the group of students you have.

Participant 05: Well, I think number one is an. I've learned this the hard way is navigation number one.

Participant 06: I define quality instruction by success rate.

Participant 07: That can be a challenging thing to describe or define. But if you want to put it into something simple as possible, then I would say quality online instruction is when students are able to fully understand and comprehend and apply the concepts that you want them to understand and apply.

Participant 08: I feel like the students need to feel that they are getting good interaction from their instructor and when at all possible, try to include this as much as I can.

Participant 09: I think quality online instruction revolves around being able to create a relationship with students, making them feel welcome that they can email me and ask questions, even if it's a dumb question and you know not to be afraid to communicate with me basically. Quality online instruction does not have to take place synchronously. It's totally possible to build a relationship with students via email or other virtual forums.

Participant 10: for me to deliver quality online instructions, I have to be flexible to adjust to the students' needs

It is clear that the participants each have their own perception of quality and define it differently. The perception of quality online instruction varies vastly from being focused on the course itself, the content, the communication, success rates, and the student’s ability to navigate the course. Faculty’s perception of quality online instructions is based on their own experiences and training.

When asked how they prepare to deliver quality online instruction, again, there were two repetitive key ideas, reviewing courses each semester and using various learning activities and tools to engage students. Creating videos for guidance and teaching, using voice threads for good communication, creating interactive content, flexibility, and meeting course goals were all responses from other faculty about how they deliver quality online instruction.

Table 2 *Define and Deliver Quality Online Instruction*

Participant Number	How Faculty Define Quality Online Instruction?	How Faculty Prepare to Deliver Quality Online Instruction?
1	Course design.	Reviews courses each semester. Create videos for the course.
2	Ensure that the goals of the course were met.	Makes sure courses offer a variety of learning activities.
3	It depends on the class and requires flexibility.	Makes sure instruction meets the competencies of the course.
4	I could not define quality online instruction.	Feels unprepared to deliver quality online instruction.
5	Course design. Student engagement.	Provide students with meaningful content.
6	Success rates.	Assess each course and adapt processes as needed.
7	It is challenging to define— student comprehension.	Prepares each course to cover objectives and make sure students can complete the correlating assignments.
8	Student engagement.	Create an interesting, relevant learning environment.
9	Student engagement. Good communication.	Uses voice threads to create asynchronous communication and build relationships.
10	Student engagement and meet the goals of the course.	Tries to be flexible to the student’s needs, create videos, interactive content.

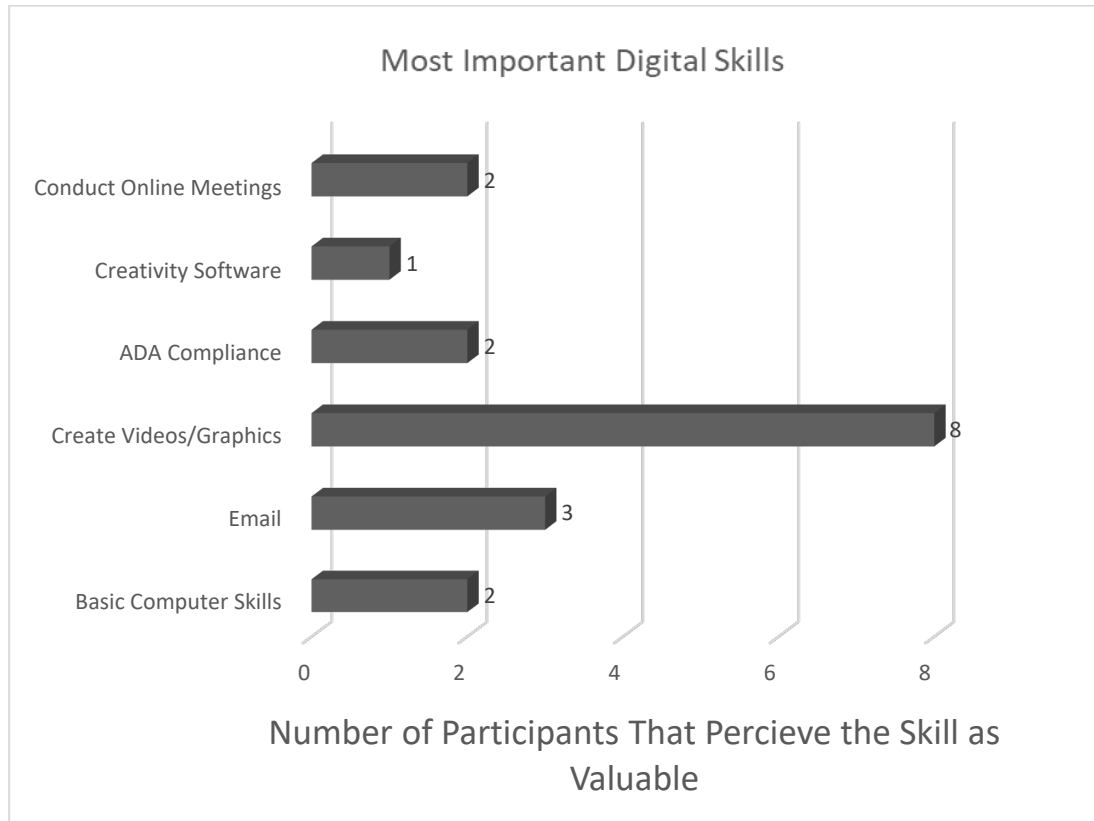
Technology Challenges

Theme 4: Being able to create videos and use communication tools are perceived by faculty as the most significant technology challenge that impacts their preparedness to teach online.

As stated in the literature, the use of technology when teaching online brings challenges. Digital skills are an essential part of overcoming those challenges. When faculty were asked to talk about the digital skills that they perceive to be the most helpful in preparing to teach online, there was one skill that was common among most faculty and that skill was creating videos. A majority of the faculty participants responded that being able to create videos to be used in delivering online instruction was a challenge and a critically important digital skill to have, as shown in Figure 4. The next most important digital skill was the use of email to communicate effectively with students. Basic computer skills, understanding ADA Compliance, use of creativity software, knowing how to conduct online meetings, and learning new technologies were responses that at least one other faculty participant felt were important digital skills need to prepare to deliver quality online instruction. One faculty participant felt they were not able to answer this question as they did not feel knowledgeable enough about digital skills to provide an answer. Two other faculty suggested there should be instructional designers available with the skills needed to help faculty deliver their online courses. One faculty felt was it is not a faculty members job to know how to build online classes and maintain digital skills to build content but rather to focus on teaching their field of expertise. Lastly, one faculty suggested that digital skills should, at a minimum, match those of the students.

Figure 4

Important Digital Skills for Teaching Online



When asked if changes in technology impact their preparedness to teach online, most faculty had mixed feelings and they felt that changes could cause faculty to struggle with those changes during the semester. One faculty explained that they are used to small changes, but bigger changes can seriously impact their preparedness to teach online. As shown in Table 3, only two participants felt that changes in technology had no impact on their preparedness to teach online. One faculty responded that they embrace changes and new technologies.

Table 3 *Changes in Technology*

Participant	Do Changes in Technology Impact Preparedness?
1	Mixed Feelings.
2	Mixed Feelings.
3	Mixed Feelings. Small changes are ok, but major changes are a struggle.
4	Changes are a struggle
5	Mixed Feelings
6	No impact in preparedness
7	Embraces changes
8	Changes impact preparedness
9	Mixed feelings changes are exhausting
10	Mixed Feelings

Significant responses from faculty about their perceptions of technology

challenges encompassed the following:

Participant 01: Well, I think that depends on the change in technology that you have because sometimes it can really throw you for a loop if you've been using one way of connecting with students and then a new way is supposed to be implemented, then you have to not only learn how to use it yourself, but you have to teach the students how to use it.

Participant 02: Definitely anything with the email. We know the students already know how to use email. You need to be able to keep up with student's digital skills.

Participant 04: It's very simple. As soon as I figure out how something is beginning to work, I start to get confident that I can do a limited amount of stuff with the technology that I figured out how to use; they go and change it. So, I'm always spending more time learning the technology than I am in applying it to my courses and improving my courses to simple as that.

Participant 08: Changes in technology definitely impact my preparedness to teach online, including anything from new ways to link a book to my course or to have to learn something new before a semester is a challenge.

Participant 09: Changes in technology are really tiring., always, like whenever there's an update, something isn't going to work right and it always creates, you know, some sort of little issue. So, changes in technology are good

in the aspect that it keeps getting better, but when it causes issues, it can be stressful.

Participant 10: Oh, it impacts it greatly. For instance, we're converting to a new learning management system. Well, it is really causing me to struggle this semester. It has slowed things down, and then the way I've done things, I've had to adjust because the new system doesn't have the capabilities that the previous system had. So, it can really slow you down and hinder things. And then on the flip side, if it's good, it's great, you know but if it's bad or difficult or it can slow it down.

Faculty were asked what skills, training, or resources they felt would help them be more prepared to teach online in the future. Once again, learning how to create videos was a vital training need, according to the responses. In addition, individual training related to specific needs of that faculty was another important training need suggested by several faculty participants. Other suggestions for future training included how to plan & build a course and a general need for professional development. Once again, it was suggested that future needs assessment include consideration for an instructional designer and time to build courses.

Faculty Perception and Experiences

Theme 5: Most faculty felt that their least prepared experience was their first time teaching online

At the end of the interview, faculty were asked to describe an experience where they were not fully prepared to teach online. The responses were similar by a majority of faculty in that they related their most unprepared experience to the first time they taught an online class, their first live online class, or the first semester that they taught online. For example, one response indicated that they have never felt prepared. Another response stated that they always felt prepared except for a time such as when an illness

occurred, and they could not manage their online class. Overall, faculty felt they were least prepared during their first experience in the online environment.

Table 4 *Participants Experience*

Participant	Experience Where Faculty Were Not Prepared to Teach Online
1	First semester online. I was not prepared.
2	First, live, online class. I am not prepared.
3	First semester online. Never fully prepared.
4	Has felt unprepared their entire career teaching online
5	First semester online. Never fully prepared.
6	Always prepared other than in times such an illness that prevented from being prepared.
7	First semester online.
8	First, live, online class. Not prepared to support the issues that arose.
9	Recently, due to changes in technology, specifically the use of a new learning management system.
10	First online class. Not prepared

In summary, this study was conducted to understand the faculty’s lived experiences preparing to teach online. The interview process revealed the perceptions and experiences of faculty that have experience teaching online and the issues they face when preparing to teach online. Overall, the faculty interviews gave the insight to answer the research question “How do faculty prepare to teach online?”.

This study met the objectives, and the interviews provided an in-depth understanding of the faculty’s years of experience and the types of training the faculty have completed helping them prepare to teach online. Exploring the faculty perceptions and experiences provided a foundation for understanding the faculty’s journey to prepare to teach online each semester. Lastly, the interviews uncovered the digital skills that

faculty perceive to be essential for preparing to teach online and the skill they would like to learn in the future.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction and Summary of Study

This study was a qualitative exploration that adopted a phenomenological approach to reach the objectives of the study. This chapter will feature the importance of the main themes formulated from the results of the interviews with faculty and their perceptions and lived experiences of preparing to teach online. The purpose of this study was to gain a meaningful understanding of how faculty prepare to teach online at Rural Community College. In addition, it provided a solid foundation to begin building a system of leadership, support, and policies for preparing faculty to teach online. The research was successful in answering the main research question, “How do faculty prepare to teach online.” The objectives (1) identify the faculty's years of experience teaching both in-person and online and the different types of training or professional development that faculty have complete to help them prepare to teach online. (2) explore faculty perceptions and experiences of how they prepare to teach online. (3) identify the different types of technology faculty use to teach online.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Faculty Profiles

Faculty who participated in this study were representative of the population of online faculty at Rural Community College. While participation was voluntary, the selection process ensured that there were participants from different teaching disciplines. Participants were also vetted for experience to acquire experiences from both experienced and less experienced faculty. Out of all faculty interviewed, only one reported that they had formal training to prepare them to teach online. All of the other

participants reported that they had not participated in formal training but did report training from the institution or professional development. The resulting profiles of faculty teaching online indicate that faculty at Rural Community College each has a unique path to how they started their online teaching journey.

Training

While exploring the processes that faculty use to prepare to teach online, the researcher uncovered a wealth of information related to the processes or pre-semester tasks implemented or developed by faculty at RCC, particularly from faculty with more than five years' experience. Faculty had not implemented processes to prepare to teach online, or their pre-semester tasks were not considered to be a preparation process for teaching online. During the interviews, it was apparent that questions number 3 and 4 from Appendix C: Interview Questions could have been reworded to prompt a more relatable and meaningful response.

Question 9 from Appendix C: Interview Questions asks what skills, training, or resources faculty think would be most helpful in preparing to teach online resulted in a familiar response once again about learning to create videos for their courses and the need to learn how to plan a course. Most faculty had little training to teach them to how to plan out a course. Faculty expressed through their opinions that they don't mind learning to use technology; however, their job is to be a subject matter expert and teach the subject matter, not to build online courses; being an expert at building an online class is the job of an instructional designer. Several faculties expressed throughout the interviews that they wish the college had an instructional designer to help them build their online classes.

Quality

Responses to questions 5 and 6 from Appendix C: Interview Questions, for the most part, were prompt and to the point when asked during the interviews. With the overall theme being student engagement and meeting the goals of the course, it was clear that each faculty defines quality in a different way and how they prepare to deliver their online courses to meet their own definition of quality was also vastly different. One theme did stand out, and that was they were focused on the courses themselves, not particularly their own preparedness to deliver quality online instructions. Again, it was evident during the interviews and noted by the researcher that the question could have been reworded to produce a more meaningful response.

Technology Challenges

Throughout the interview process, it was evident to the researcher that the faculty's teaching field could have influenced the results of questions 7 and 8 in Appendix C: Interview Questions. For example, the number one digital skill that faculty perceived to be most helpful in preparing to teach online was knowing how to create videos. It is also worth noting that faculty teaching subjects that often engage in the use of technology did not seem to mind changes in technology as much as faculty who teach in subjects that do not regularly engage in the use of technology. However, it was noted that the consensus from the faculty indicated the greatest challenge was major changes in technology that occur before the start of the semester. For example, changes or upgrades to the learning management system can significantly impact how faculty prepare to teach online in a negative manner.

Faculty Perceptions and Experience

When faculty discussed a time, they were not fully prepared to teach online, most faculty related to their first experiences teaching online. However, the response from one faculty participant, who had more than five years of experience teaching online and said they still felt like they were not prepared to teach online, was concerning. This faculty experience should signal a red flag and reflects the gaps at RCC for preparing faculty to teach online.

Implications

This study presented a wealth of information that could be used to guide the development of a process or training that specifically addresses the needs of the faculty to help them learn how to prepare to teach online. The study exposes why community colleges need to provide meaningful training to all faculty teaching online. Community colleges that do not provide faculty with a clear definition of how faculty are expected to define and deliver quality online instruction that aligns with the goals of the college, risk increasing the variance of faculty perceptions and quality of online instruction produced by faculty. A united vision of how quality online instruction is delivered could guide faculty when preparing to teach online. Digital skills are necessary to teach online. The faculty interviews could be used to create meaningful training material and policies that would provide clear expectations for faculty to learn digital skills. It was clear to the researcher that faculty are willing to learn to prepare to teach online and want to provide their students with the highest quality of online instruction possible. Ideally would be a great benefit if the college developed a foundational system that

supports faculty as a whole and individually as they grow in the online environment of ever-changing technology.

This study has provided much information about how faculty at RCC prepare to teach online; however, the study is not without limitations, such as a small sample size. A larger sample size would have ensured that the research was representative of the entire population of online faculty at RCC. The researcher noted that it was not entirely clear to the faculty what was meant by the phrase “prepare to teach online” during each interview. It was meant for the faculty to reflect on themselves and how they prepare to teach online each semester. It was also noted that this had to be explained to many faculties during the interview process as most faculty’s first instinct was to relate their response to course design rather than how they prepare to teach online each semester.

Recommendations

The main goal of this study was to explore how faculty teach online at Rural Community College and add to the current body of literature regarding preparing to teach online at the community college level. The researcher explored faculty’s lived experiences preparing to teach online. Based on the results of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations for preparing faculty to teach online.

Assess Faculty

Both experienced and inexperienced faculty can have various levels of training. Assessing the faculty to determine their level of knowledge about teaching online and how to teach faculty to prepare to teach online each semester will provide those in supportive roles with the information needed to provide each faculty with individualized support. To gain a truer perspective of faculty, an assessment of each

faculty member could be used to build a profile of each faculty to easily categorize and label the skill levels and experiences of those faculty which could then be used for forming a mentor program. Faculty profiles could be placed in a database system to easily match new online faculty to a suitable mentor.

Defined Policies

Policies are meant to guide, define, and outline expectations. This study clearly indicated that each faculty had a different definition of quality online instructions. The researcher recommends further investigation into how the institution and faculty define quality online instructions and create a united definition to be used by everyone. Additionally, allowing faculty and the college to develop precise instructions and support faculty preparing to deliver quality online instruction.

Digital Skills and Future Training

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that further consideration for training faculty to create videos for online classes is a skill that faculty want and need. Another future training recommendation from the researcher is to develop training that teaches faculty how to plan an online course from start to finish.

Instructional Designer

Lastly, the researcher recommended further research to explore the perceptions and experience of rural community college faculty with access to an instructional designer compared to those who do not have access to an instructional designer. Hiring an instructional designer is feasible. Based on the results of the study, faculty who teach online need a higher level of digital skills to communicate and create course content. However, the faculty's job is to be the expert in their field of study; what

impact would an instructional designer have in assisting faculty in preparing to teach online? Would an instructional designer allow faculty to have more time to for engaging students, maintaining their subject matter expertise, and delivering quality online instruction?

Conclusions

This study set out to explore and answer the research question, how do faculty prepare to teach online, which found that each faculty has a unique experience and perception of what it means to prepare to teach online. Each faculty has a different approach and background in teaching online. For the most part, faculty felt that they were able to find a way to manage and overcome most issues they encounter when preparing to teach online but would like a more defined, structured process. Hopefully, this research has contributed to a better understanding of the faculty perspective and experiences that could be used to improve the processes and support for online faculty at the community college level. During the timeframe of this research, it is worth noting that the entire world experienced a pandemic that created a phenomenon of epic proportions, and at some point, during 2020, in the United States, all levels of education were operating remotely for some time. Today in 2021, the world is still struggling to deal with the fallout of the pandemic. While it is certain that the pandemic temporarily changed education, it is still yet to be determined if it will leave a permanent mark.

References

- Albrahim, F. A. (2020). Online teaching skills and competencies. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 19(1), 12.
- Altman, B., Shattuck, K., Simunich, B., & Burch, B. (2020). Quality assurance implementation: how it works. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 23(4), 1–12.
- Archibald, C., & Barnes, C. (2017). Reflection: Lessons learned from teaching online in undergraduate programs. *The ABNF Journal*, 6.
- Aust, P., Thomas, G., Powell, T., Randall, C. K., Slinger-Friedman, V., Terantino, J., & Reardon, T. (2015). Advanced faculty professional development for online course building: an action research project. *Internet Learning*, 4(2).
<https://doi.org/10.18278/il.4.2.8>
- Badia, A., Garcia, C., & Meneses, J. (2017). Approaches to teaching online: Exploring factors influencing teachers in a fully online university: Factors influencing approaches to teaching online. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 48(6), 1193–1207. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12475>
- Báez, J. C., Marquart, M., Chung, R. Y.-E., Ryan, D., & Garay, K. (2019). Developing and supporting faculty training for online social work education: The Columbia University School of Social Work Online Pedagogy Institute. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 39(4–5), 505–518.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2019.1653419>
- Baldwin, S., & Trespalacios, J. H. (2017). Evaluation instruments and good practices in online education. *Online Learning*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v21i2.913>

- Baran, E., & Correia, A.-P. (2014). A professional development framework for online teaching. *TechTrends*, 58(5), 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-014-0791-0>
- Bloomberg, L. D. (2020). Coaching faculty to teach online: A single qualitative case study at an online university. *International Journal of Online Graduate Education*, 3, 23.
- Bourelle, T. (2016). Preparing graduate students to teach online: Theoretical and pedagogical practices (Vol. 40).
- Briggs, A., Gebrekristos, S., & Spaulding, S. (2020). Supporting community college learners online (p. 59).
- Cejda, B. D. (2007). Connecting to the larger world: Distance education in rural community colleges. *New directions for community colleges*, 2007(137), 87–98. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.273>
- Chen, K.-Z., Lowenthal, P. R., Bauer, C., Heaps, A., & Nielsen, C. (2017). Moving beyond smile sheets: A case study on the evaluation and iterative improvement of an online faculty development program. *online learning*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v21i1.810>
- Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE bulletin*, 3, 7.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design*. London: Sage Publications
- Crews, T. B., & Wilkinson, K. (2015). Online quality course design vx. quality teaching: Aligning quality matters standards to principles for good teaching. *57(1)*, 18.

- Cross, T., & Polk, L. (2018). Burn bright, not out: Tips for managing online teaching. *Journal of Educators Online*, 15(3). <https://doi.org/10.9743/jeo.2018.15.3.1>
- Dohle, N. J., Machner, M., & Buchmann, M. (2021). Peer teaching under pandemic conditions – options and challenges of online tutorials on practical skills. *Peer teaching unter Pandemiebedingungen – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen studentischer Online-Tutorien zu praktischen Fertigkeiten.*, 38(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3205/zma001403>
- Frass, L. R., & Rucker, R. D. (2017). An overview of how four institutions prepare faculty to teach online. *Journal of Online Higher Education*, 1(1), 7.
- Frazer, C., Sullivan, D. H., Weatherspoon, D., & Hussey, L. (2017). Faculty perceptions of online teaching effectiveness and indicators of quality. *Nursing Research and Practice*, 2017, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2017/9374189>
- Gregory, R. L., Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. J., & Cook, V. S. (2020). Community college faculty perceptions of the Quality Matters™ Rubric. *Online Learning*, 24(2), 128–141.
- Hannigan, J., & Gonzalez, J. C. (2019). Doctoral faculty teaching online: A qualitative understanding of methods to improve online teaching. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.9743/jeo.2019.16.1.3>
- Hurt, J. F. (2006). *Community college instructors' perceptions of online teaching and learning: A study of a rural community college*. 189.
- Horvitz, B. S., Beach, A. L., Anderson, M. L., & Xia, J. (2015). Examination of faculty self-efficacy related to online teaching. *Innovative Higher Education*, 40(4), 305–316. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-014-9316-1>

- Kibaru, F. (2018). Supporting faculty to face challenges in design and delivery of quality courses in virtual learning environments. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 176–197. <https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.471915>
- Kowalczyk, N. K. (2014). Perceived barriers to online education by radiologic science educators. *Radiologic Technology*, 85(5), 9.
- Lane, L. (2013). An open, online class to prepare faculty to teach online. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.9743/JEO.2013.1.1>
- Leary, H., Dopp, C., Turley, C., Cheney, M., Simmons, Z., Graham, C. R., & Hatch, R. (2020). Professional development for online teaching: A literature review. *Online Learning*, 24(4), 254–275. <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v24i4.2198>
- Leist, J., & Travis, J. (2010). Planning for online courses at rural community colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2010(150), 17–25. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.401>
- Levy, D. (2017). Online, blended and technology-enhanced learning: Tools to facilitate community college student success in the digitally-driven workplace. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER)*, 10(4), 255–262. <https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v10i4.10039>
- Littlefield, M. B., Rubinstein, K., & Laveist, C. B. (2019). Designing for quality: distance education rubrics for online MSW programs. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 39(4/5), 489–504. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2019.1658691>
- Luongo, N. (2018). An examination of distance learning faculty satisfaction levels and self-perceived barriers. *Journal of Educators Online*, 15(2). <https://doi.org/10.9743/jeo.2018.15.2.8>

- Lowenthal, P. R., Gooding, M., Shreaves, D., & Kepka, J. (2019). Learning to teach online: An exploration of how universities with large online programs train and develop faculty to teach online. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 20(3), 1–9.
- Martin, F., Budhrani, K., & Wang, C. (2019a). Examining faculty perception of their readiness to teach online. *Online Learning*, 23(3).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v23i3.1555>
- Martin, F., Budhrani, K., Kumar, S., & Ritzhaupt, A. (2019b). Award-winning faculty online teaching practices: roles and competencies. *Online Learning*, 23(1).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v23i1.1329>
- Merillat, L., & Scheibmeir, M. (2016). Developing a quality improvement process to optimize faculty success. *Online Learning*, 20(3).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v20i3.977>
- Meyer, P. (2013). Crafting an approach to online teaching. *Journal of Instructional Research*, 2, 43–47. <https://doi.org/10.9743/JIR.2013.2.15>
- Mohr, S., & Shelton, K. (2017). Best practices framework for online faculty professional development: A delphi study. *Online Learning*, 21(4).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v21i4.1273>
- National Standards for Quality Online Learning*. (2021). <https://nsq.2gno.me/pricing/>
- Perifanou, M., Economides, A. A., & Tzafilkou, K. (2021). Teachers' digital skills readiness during COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)*, 16(08), 238.
<https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v16i08.21011>

- Piña, A. A., & Bohn, L. (2014). Assessing online faculty *More Than Student Surveys and Design Rubrics*. *15*(3), 11.
- Powell, A., Oliver, W., Archambault, L., Borup, J., Boyarko, M., Cavanaugh, C., Copeland, R., Day, J., DeRosa-Davis, T., Deschaine, M., Graham, C., Hanson, E., Hernandez, B., Imbrunone, M., Kennedy, K., Consulting, K. K., Kolar-Burden, J., Little, T., Loomis, K., ... Online, P. (2019). *National Standards for Quality Online Teaching. Third Edition*, 33.
- Purcell, J. W., Scott, H. I., & Mixson-Brookshire, D. (2017). Continuous improvement in online education: Documenting teaching effectiveness in the online environment through observations. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, *20*(4), 1–7.
- Dunlap, J. C., & Lowenthal, P. R. (2018). Online educators' recommendations for teaching online: Crowdsourcing in action. *Open Praxis*, *10*(1), 79.
<https://doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.10.1.721>
- Ruoslahti, H. (2020). From classroom to online teaching—A case during COVID19. *Information & Security*, *46*(3), 285–292. <https://doi.org/10.11610/isij.4620>
- Safta-Zecheria, L., Ștefăniță, S.-A., Negru, I.-A., & Virag, F.-H. (2020). Challenges experienced by teachers regarding access to digital instruments, resources, and competencies in adapting the educational process to physical distancing measures at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Romania. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, *42*(2), 69–86. <https://doi.org/10.35923/JES.2020.2.05>
- Sanga, M. W. (2018). Getting To Master Online Teaching. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, *19*(2), 12.

- Schulte, M., Dennis, K., Eskey, M., Taylor, C., & Zeng, H. (2012). Creating a sustainable online instructor observation system: A case study highlighting flaws when blending mentoring and evaluation. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 13(3), 83.
<https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v13i3.1135>
- Shea, P. (2019). Bridges and barriers to teaching online college courses: A study of experienced online faculty in thirty-six colleges. *Online Learning*, 11(2).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v11i2.1728>
- Sheffield, S. L.-M., McSweeney, J. M., & Panych, A. (2015). Exploring future teachers' awareness, competence, confidence, and attitudes regarding teaching online: incorporating blended/online experience into the teaching and learning in higher education course for graduate students. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 45(3), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v45i3.187551>
- Schmidt, S. W., Tschida, C. M., & Hodge, E. M. (2016). How faculty learn to teach online: What administrators need to know. 9.
- Smydra, R. V., Mysen, K., & Jostock, K. L. (2018). Educating educators: Implementing quality online teaching certification programs. *Michigan Academician*, 45(2), 329–346. <https://doi.org/10.7245/0026-2005-45.2.329>
- McGee, P., Windes, D., & Torres, M. (2017). Experienced online instructors: Beliefs and preferred supports regarding online teaching. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 29(2), 331–352. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-017-9140-6>
- Vasquez-Iscan, E. (2019). Teaching online at a south Bronx community college. *HETS Online Journal*, 9, 57–82.

- Walters, S., Grover, K. S., Turner, R. C., & Alexander, J. C. (2017). Faculty perceptions related to teaching online: A starting point for designing faculty development initiatives. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 4–19.
<https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.340365>
- Wingo, N. P., Ivankova, N. V., & Moss, J. A. (2017). Faculty perceptions about teaching online: Exploring the literature using the technology acceptance model as an organizing framework. *Online Learning*, 21(1).
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v21i1.761>
- Wynants, S., & Dennis, J. (2018). Professional development in an online context: opportunities and challenges from the voices of college faculty. *Journal of Educators Online*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.9743/JEO2018.15.1.2>
- Yang, Y., & Cornelious, L. F. (2004). Ensuring quality in online education instruction: what instructors should know? *Association for Educational Communications and Technology*, 14.
- Zweig, J., Stafford, E., Clements, M., & Pazzaglia, A. M. (2015). Professional experiences of online teachers in Wisconsin: Results from a survey about training and challenges (What's Happening, p. 40) [Descriptions of policies, programs, implementation status, or data trends]. The Regional Educational Laboratory Program.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

IRB

Table of Contents

Davidson, Gwendolyn - #3668 - A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?	1
Application Form.....	3
CITI Training Documentation	13
Other Attachment 1.....	14
Other Attachment 2.....	15
Other Attachment 3.....	16
Other Attachment 4.....	18
Other Attachment 5.....	22

Application Summary

Competition Details

Competition Title:	IRB Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination
Category:	Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Research)
Award Cycle:	All
Submission Deadline:	06/30/2022 11:59 PM

Application Information

Submitted By:	Gwendolyn Davidson
Application ID:	3668
Application Title:	A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?
Date Submitted:	02/16/2021 10:11 AM

Personal Details

Applicant First Name:	Gwendolyn
Applicant Last Name:	Davidson
Email Address:	gwendolyn_davidso5@mymail.eku.edu
Phone Number:	(606) 438-8408
Mailing Address:	1137 Walker Branch Rd., Hazard, KY 41701
Applicant Type:	EKU Student

Application Details

Proposal Title

A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?

Name of Faculty Research Advisor (required for student submissions)

Dr. Charles Hausman

Name of Department Chair/Unit Director

Doctor of Educational Leadership and Policy: Dr. Charles Hausman

Notes/Comments

I have made the suggested corrections and attached the updated documents for resubmission. Thank you.

Status (IRB Use Only)

Approved

Approval Date (IRB Use Only)

02/16/2021

Acknowledgment

Investigator Certification

[Acknowledged] I certify that this application fully discloses the involvement of human subjects in this research study and that participants will not be involved in any other way.

I agree to:

1. Follow the approved protocol in the conduct of this study and to abide by ECU Policy 4.4.12: Protecting Human Subjects in Research.
2. Accept responsibility for the scientific and ethical conduct of this research study.
3. Obtain prior approval from the Institutional Review Board before implementing any changes to the research protocol or the study's documents, including those approved for recruitment, consent, and data collection.
4. Immediately report to the IRB any serious adverse reactions and/or unanticipated effects on subjects which may occur as a result of this study.
5. Follow IRB reporting requirements, including filing the final report.

I understand that I am responsible for maintaining records related to this study for a period of three years from the study's completion, or if I am a student, I am responsible for providing my research records to my faculty advisor or making arrangements with the IRB Office for records maintenance.

Eastern Kentucky University Institutional Review Board Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination

This application is to be used to request an exemption determination under a limited review process. Only the IRB may issue an exemption determination, and the investigator must receive this determination prior to engaging in research activities involving human subjects.

In order for human subjects research to be reviewed under limited review for an exemption determination, the study must represent not greater than minimal risk to its participants and include only activities that fall within the categories listed in this application (see Section 2).

Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

Instructions for Applying for Limited Review

1. All applications for IRB review must be submitted online by the principal investigator.
2. After completing this application form and all required attachments, access the online submission system at eku.infoready4.com. Choose Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination from the list of available opportunities and click the Apply button on the right. If needed, you can filter the category column by Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Research).
3. If you are a current EKU employee or student, click the option to log in as an EKU user. Your user name and password are the same as what you use to log in to EKU's network. Your user name is not your email address.
4. Complete the basic information in the online application and upload this application form and all required attachments in their original file formats (i.e., Microsoft Word documents). **Please do not convert files to PDFs.** PDFs are allowable for signed documents, CITI training documentation, and other files that were provided to you in PDF format. **If you copy and paste text into the application's form fields, please format your text to Tahoma font in size 10 prior to copying.**
5. Upon receipt of a new online application, the IRB administrator will review the submission for completeness and return incomplete applications for updates prior to processing.
6. Once an application is accepted by the IRB administrator, it will be assigned to the faculty advisor (if the principal investigator is a student) and the department chair for approvals prior to being reviewed by the IRB.
7. If the IRB reviewers have questions or request updates to the application materials, the principal investigator will be notified by email and asked to resubmit application materials by email.
8. Once the IRB has approved the application, the principal investigator will be notified by email.

Application Checklist

In order for the IRB to consider an exemption determination through a limited review process, the following items are required:

- Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination (this application)
- CITI Training Completion Reports for all investigators, key personnel, and faculty research advisors
Note that the Basic Course for Social Behavioral or Biomedical Researchers is required. The Refresher Course cannot be accepted unless the investigator has previously completed the Basic Course and is using the Refresher Course to renew training credentials.

As applicable (check all that apply):

- Recruitment materials (i.e., advertisements, verbal scripts, cover letters, etc.)
- Consent Materials (i.e., introductory cover letter, consent script, etc.)
- Instrument(s) to be used for data collection (i.e., surveys, questionnaires, interview questions, assessments, etc.)
- Letter(s) granting permission to use off-campus facility for research

*All documents that will be provided to subjects must include the title of the study.
This includes recruitment, consent, and data collection documents.*

Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination

Section 1: General Information

- 1 Title of Study:** How Faculty Prepare to Teach Online
- 2 Principal Investigator:**
Principal Investigator Name: Gwendolyn Davidson
Department: Educational Leadership & Policy
Position: Student
- 3 Degree Program, Faculty Advisor, and Committee Members:**
(Skip to Item 4 if principal investigator is not an EKU student)
Degree Program: Doctor of Education Ed.D.
Faculty Research Advisor: Dr. Charels Hausman
Committee Members (required for theses, dissertations, scholarly projects, field experience, or other studies guided by an academic committee):
Dr. Ann Burns and Dr. Barbara Shoemaker
- 4 Other Investigators:** Identify all other investigators assisting in the study. If additional lines are needed, please attach a Continuation Page for Other Investigators.
- Name: [Click and type.](#) Authorized to obtain consent? Yes No
Responsibility in Project: [Click and type.](#)
Name: [Click and type.](#) Authorized to obtain consent? Yes No
Responsibility in Project: [Click and type.](#)
Name: [Click and type.](#) Authorized to obtain consent? Yes No
Responsibility in Project: [Click and type.](#)
Name: [Click and type.](#) Authorized to obtain consent? Yes No
Responsibility in Project: [Click and type.](#)
Name: [Click and type.](#) Authorized to obtain consent? Yes No
Responsibility in Project: [Click and type.](#)
Please check if a Continuation Page for Other Investigators is attached.
- 5 Estimated Duration of Research Project:** upon IRB approval through /31/2021
Note that research may not begin until IRB approval has been granted. Projects may be approved for a period of up to three years, after which time, a new application is required.
- 6 Funding Support:** Is the research study funded by an internal grant or an external grant or contract?
Yes No
Funding Agency: [Click and type.](#)
- 7 Is the proposed study a clinical trial?** Yes No
Please respond to the following questions to determine whether a study meets the clinical trial definition:
- Does the study involve human participants? Yes No
 - Are the participants prospectively assigned to an intervention? Yes No
 - Is the study designed to evaluate the effect of the intervention on the participants? Yes No
 - Is the effect being evaluated a health-related biomedical or behavioral outcome? Yes No
- If the answers are all "yes," the study is a clinical trial. If any answers are "no," the study is not a clinical trial
- 8 Risk Category:**
 Not greater than minimal risk
 Greater than minimal risk, but of direct benefit to individual participants - *Please complete full review application instead of this form.*
 Greater than minimal risk and no direct benefit to individual participants, but likely to yield generalizable knowledge about the subject's disorder or condition - *Please complete full review application instead of this form.*

Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination

Section 2: Exemption Categories

Research activities may be classified as exempt when the only involvement of human subjects falls within one or more of the categories below and the study represents not greater than minimal risk to its participants. If any activities do not fit in the categories below, the project is not eligible for exemption, and the investigator is required to instead apply for expedited or full review.

1. Select one or more of the categories below that apply to the research project:

- Category 1:** Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- Category 2:** Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
- (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;
 - (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or
 - (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination that there are adequate safeguards to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the subjects.

IMPORTANT: Subpart D: Additional Protections for Children Involved as Subjects in Research restricts Exemption 2 in the following ways:

- For research involving children, exemption 2 (i) and 2 (ii) above may be applied only to research involving educational tests or the observation of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed.
- Exemption 2 may not be applied to survey procedures or interview procedures involving children as subjects.
- Exemption 2 (iii) above may not be applied to research involving children.

- Category 3:** Research involving benign behavioral interventions* in conjunction with the collection of information from an **adult** subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met:
- (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;
 - (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or
 - (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination that there are adequate safeguards to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the subjects.

*Benign behavioral interventions are brief in duration, harmless, painless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on the subjects, and the investigator has no reason to think the subjects will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing. Provided all such criteria are met, examples of such benign behavioral interventions would include having the subjects play an online game, having them solve puzzles under various noise conditions, or having them decide how to allocate a nominal amount of received cash between themselves and someone else.

Does the project involve deception? Yes No

If the research involves deceiving the subjects regarding the nature or purposes of the research, this exemption is not applicable unless the subject authorizes the deception through a prospective agreement to participate in research in circumstances in which the subject is informed that he or she will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature or purposes of the research.

IMPORTANT: Note that this exemption applies only to adult subjects and cannot be applied to research involving children.

- Category 4:** Secondary research for which consent is not required: Secondary research uses of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, if at least one of the following criteria is met:
 - (i) The identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens are publicly available;
 - (ii) Information, which may include information about biospecimens, is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, the investigator does not contact the subjects, and the investigator will not re-identify subjects;
 - (iii) The research involves only information collection and analysis involving the investigator's use of identifiable health information when that use is regulated under 45 CFR parts 160 and 164, subparts A and E, for the purposes of "health care operations" or "research" as those terms are defined at 45 CFR 164.501 or for "public health activities and purposes" as described under 45 CFR 164.512(b); or
 - (iv) The research is conducted by, or on behalf of, a Federal department or agency using government-generated or government-collected information obtained for non-research activities, if the research generates identifiable private information that is or will be maintained on information technology that is subject to and in compliance with section 208(b) of the E-Government Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. 3501 note, if all of the identifiable private information collected, used, or generated as part of the activity will be maintained in systems of records subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and, if applicable, the information used in the research was collected subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.
- Category 5:** Research and demonstration projects that are conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, or otherwise subject to the approval of department or agency heads (or the approval of the heads of bureaus or other subordinate agencies that have been delegated authority to conduct the research and demonstration projects), and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs, including procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. Such projects include, but are not limited to, internal studies by Federal employees, and studies under contracts or consulting arrangements, cooperative agreements, or grants. Exempt projects also include waivers of otherwise mandatory requirements using authorities such as sections 1115 and 1115A of the Social Security Act, as amended. Each Federal department or agency conducting or supporting the research and demonstration projects must establish, on a publicly accessible Federal Web site or in such other manner as the department or agency head may determine, a list of the research and demonstration projects that the Federal department or agency conducts or supports under this provision. The research or demonstration project must be published on this list prior to commencing the research involving human subjects.
- Category 6:** Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies:
 - (i) If wholesome foods without additives are consumed, or
 - (ii) If a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

2. Will the study involve any procedures that fall outside the categories selected in Item 1 of this section? No Yes - apply for full or expedited review instead of exemption

3. Will the project involve prisoners? No Possibly Incidentally Yes - apply for full review

Subpart C: Additional Protections Pertaining to Biomedical and Behavioral Research Involving Prisoners as Subjects restricts the exemption categories below from being applied to research involving prisoners except for research aimed at involving a broader subject population that only incidentally includes prisoners (i.e., a web-based survey that an inmate may be able to access from a prison computer without the researcher being aware of the prisoner status).

Limited Review Application for Exemption Determination

Section 3: Research Description

1. Research Objectives:

a. List the research objectives/hypotheses.

Introduction:

Since the inception of online programs, many community college processes have moved to automated online registration processes, financial aid, advising, and even retention efforts that require faculty to have enhanced digital skills to use the various digital tools. As with all technology, the constant updates and changes to software systems, policies, and procedures, faculty work hard to keep up with all of the digital tools used today on the frontier of digital education. Community college faculty may be required to learn, on their own, the many skills needed to do their job. Skills needed to teach online include: navigating a learning management system, developing online courses, learning best practices for teaching online, and acquiring the digital skills needed to implement a variety of learning technologies in their online courses, or learning how to engage online students in communication through email or other online communication platforms. All of these digital obstacles can overwhelm faculty and create barriers to successful teaching online.

Problem Background:

Community colleges often require new online faculty to complete some online faculty training before teaching online. "As more institutions move to online courses, the need for faculty development for those who have never taught online increases. Faculty will be more successful and increase the chances of a positive learning experience for their students if they are prepared for this new environment both pedagogically and technologically" (Frass, Rucker, & Washington, 2017, p. 5). Community colleges also offer professional development throughout the semester that is specific to the digital tools used to teach online. While faculty may be required to complete training, is it enough to prepare them to teach online and juggle the many demands of day-to-day tasks? With seasoned, primarily in-person faculty transitioning from the traditional classroom to online and newer faculty who may have more experience with the online class format, community colleges find themselves needing to support a wide variety of faculty digital skill sets. Some faculty may have strong digital skills while others struggle with simple tasks such as email, and then some fall anywhere in-between. This research will explore how faculty at community college prepare to teach online.

When deciding how best to support faculty members teaching online, a one size fits all solution to build and develop online faculty provides a general starting point for all faculty. Creating the best online college with the most well prepared online teaching faculty comes with various challenges and hurdles just as complex and simple as the challenges colleges face in supporting students or any other aspect of the college business model. The fast pace of change in the online world also contributes to the challenges a community college may face. The cycle of training faculty to use new technology is never-ending.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to explore how community college faculty prepare to teach online. This study will be qualitative and will use a phenomenological approach to collect information. Through this study, it is the expectation of the investigator to gain a deeper understanding of faculty's experiences as they prepare to teach online and their perceptions of those experiences. Exploring real experiences of faculty teaching online at the community college level will provide insight into what these faculty members are experiencing as they prepare to teach online each semester. How faculty prepare to teach online each semester is a unique journey for each faculty member. Regardless of their training, experience, or level of technical knowledge, all faculty prepare to teach online differently to some degree.

Understanding how faculty prepare to teach online can be beneficial to those who serve in roles that directly support faculty teaching online. Examining how faculty prepare to teach online can provide a deeper understanding of the faculty's needs as they prepare to teach online and how best to support them.

Research Questions:

(1) Identify the faculty's years of experience teaching both in-person and online, the subject they teach, and the different types of training or professional development that faculty have complete to help them prepare to teach online.

- (2) Explore faculty perceptions and experiences of how they prepare to teach online.
- (3) Identify the different types of technology faculty use to teach online.
- (4) Explore faculty perceptions of how changes in technologies impact how faculty prepare to teach online.

Significance of the study:

Determining how community college faculty prepare to teach online will help the supporting distance learning department develop relatable training that will be more meaningful and productive to supporting faculty as they prepare to teach online. This research will identify the gaps and better understand how best to prepare community college faculty to teach online.

Understanding the issues that online faculty face in the preparation process will lead to solutions that will improve online instruction's overall quality. Schulte et al. 2012 suggest that the future of online programs depends on the strength of online faculty. The success of the online programs' requires continuous growth and a sturdy support system for online faculty.

While colleges need to have processes that prepare faculty to teach online, understanding their online faculty's various perceptions and levels of experience is vital in understanding how best to ensure that faculty are armed with the digital skill and are prepared to teach online. "Lack of training opportunities and experience with learning and teaching online, as well as beliefs about the ineffectiveness of online learning in comparison with face-to-face learning, play a role in creating feelings of apprehension about teaching online and in fostering a preference for teaching and learning in the classroom" (Sheffield, McSweeney, and Panych, 2015, p. 10). Research literature supports the idea that faculty new to teaching online feel that their readiness to teach online is less than more experienced online faculty. "Faculty with little to no online teaching experience have lower perceptions of their ability in online teaching than those with more than five years' experience" (Martin, Budhrani, and Wang 2019, p.17). "Less experienced faculty may require more individualized attention from instructional designers in areas where they have indicated less confidence and satisfaction. Novices may feel overwhelmed when negotiating the challenges of the learning system and teaching in a foreign environment and require more one-on-one support" (Walters, Grover, Turner, & Alexander, 2017, p. 16). While studies such as Lowenthal et al., 2019 focus on preparing faculty to teach online at universities with large online programs, this study will focus on the faculty teaching online at the community college level.

References:

Frass, L. R., & Rucker, R. D. (n.d.). *An Overview of How Four Institutions Prepare Faculty to Teach Online*. 1(1), 7.

Lowenthal, P. R., Gooding, M., Shreaves, D., & Kepka, J. (2019). LEARNING TO TEACH ONLINE: An Exploration of How Universities With Large Online Programs Train and Develop Faculty to Teach Online. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 20(3), 1-9.

Martin, F., Budhrani, K., & Wang, C. (2019). Examining Faculty Perception of Their Readiness to Teach Online. *Online Learning*, 23(3), 97-119.

Sheffield, S. L.-M., McSweeney, J. M., & Panych, A. (2015). Exploring Future Teachers' Awareness, Competence, Confidence, and Attitudes Regarding Teaching Online: Incorporating Blended/Online Experience into the Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Course for Graduate Students. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 45(3), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v45i3.187551>

Walters, S., Grover, K. S., Turner, R. C., & Alexander, J. C. (2017). Faculty Perceptions Related to Teaching Online: A Starting Point for Designing Faculty Development Initiatives. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 18(4), 4-19.

2. Project Location:

a. Where will the study take place?

All interviews will take place by phone.

b. If the study will take place at a location other than ECU, attach a letter from an authorized representative of the organization granting permission to use facility for research purposes.

ECU only Letter(s) attached

c. Will any data be collected through organizations other than Eastern Kentucky University?

No Yes, complete the following:

- Will personnel of the organization be involved in the data collection process or have access to data after collection? No Yes - If yes, list personnel in Section 1, include copies of CITI training completion reports, and define role(s) here: [Click here to enter text.](#)

3. Subject Population:

a. What criteria will be used to determine the *inclusion* of participants in the study?

This research will use a nonprobability sampling method for the exploration of how faculty prepare to teach online. To encompass a full range of faculty perspectives, the researcher will draw a purposeful sample minimum of 8 participants which will include two participants teaching online in each of the four different disciplines taught at the community college (Humanities (11 Faculty), Health & Human Services (20 Faculty), Innovation & Educational Technology (6 Faculty), and Science (19 Faculty)). From the total sample, the researcher will seek to include a purposeful sampling from each discipline to include faculty who are experienced to teaching online (3 years or more) and faculty who are new to teaching online (Less than 3 years), to obtain a sample that is representative of all faculty teaching online at the community college.

The community college website publicly lists faculty by discipline which includes the name and contact information for each faculty. The schedule post to the community college website list all of the classes being offered online. Using information provided online, the researcher will select all faculty listed as teaching online for the Fall 2020 semester and invite them by email, to participate in the study.

b. What criteria will be used to determine the *exclusion* of participants in the study?

Participants will be excluded if they are not faculty teaching online.

c. Anticipated Number of Participants (*maximum*): 10

d. Age Range of Participants: 21-100

e. Gender of Participants: Male Female or Gender not considered in subject selection

f. Ethnicity of Participants: [Click and type.](#) or Ethnicity not considered in subject selection

g. Health Status of Participants: [Click and type.](#) or Health status not considered in subject selection

h. Will the study involve prisoners? No Possibly Incidentally without the investigator's knowledge Yes (not eligible for exemption)

i. Will the study involve subjects who do not speak and/or read English? No Yes (see Translation Certification form and guidance)

4. Recruitment of Participants:

a. How will prospective participants be identified for recruitment into the study?

In the 2020 Fall semester listed as online faculty will be identified as participants..

b. Describe the recruitment procedures to be used with potential participants.

An email will be sent to the identified participants requesting faculty to volunteer for the study.

c. Recruitment materials to be used: Check all that will be used and attach copies. The study's title must be included on all documents.

- None Advertisement Flyer Verbal Recruitment Script Cover Letter
Text to be posted in electronic participant management software
Other: [Email](#)

5. Ensuring Voluntary Participation: While studies that are appropriate for exemption are not required to formally document the informed consent process, investigators are expected to provide information to potential participants and ensure their voluntary agreement to participate.

a. What procedures will be followed to ensure that potential participants are informed about the study and made aware that their decision to participate is voluntary?

The recruitment email will clearly state that participation is voluntary and includes information about the study.

- b. Consent materials to be used:** Formal consent forms are not required for exempt research; the following are examples of items typically used in exempt research to ensure voluntary participation. Check all that will be used and attach copies: None, Cover Letter, Introductory paragraph on data collection instrument,
Other: Click and type.

6. Research Procedures

- a. Describe in detail the research procedures to be followed that pertain to human participants.** Be specific about what you will do and how you will do it.

The researcher will conduct structured interviews using a predetermined set of semi structured, yet flexible, and exploratory questions. To protect the identity and privacy of the participants, participant names will not be used in the interview, however each participate will be given a participant number for example Participant #1.

Participants will be interviewed by phone and asked a series of questions related to their experiences and perceptions about how they prepare to teach online. Before the interview starts, participants will be asked if they give permission to have the interview recorded (audio only). If participants agree, the interview will be recorded with a digital audio recorder. If participants do not want to have the interview recorded, then the researcher will take notes during the interview with paper and pen.

After each interview is conducted, the researcher will review and transcribe the interview. Once all interviews are complete and the data collected has been transcribed, the researcher will use the information to conduct a data analysis to interpret the information and answer the question of how community college faculty prepare to teach online. The researcher will analyze the data collected using an interpretive phenomenological approach, to determine if there are relatable categories or themes in the perceptions and experiences of how faculty prepare to teach online, what can be learned from this collection of data, and how can this data be used in the future to better support community college faculty as they prepare to teach online each semester.

7. Potential Risks

- a. Describe any potential risks—physical, psychological, social, legal, or other.**

No risk exists to the participants. Any information linking participants to the study will be eliminated from the study.

- b. What procedures will be followed to protect against or minimize any potential risks?**

Any confidential data concerning participants will be removed and not used in the study.

8. Potential Benefits and Subject Compensation

- a. Describe any potential benefits subjects will receive**

Subjects will not receive any benefits or compensation.

- b. Will subjects receive compensation for their participation?** No Yes (describe in detail below)

Click and type.

9. Research Materials, Records, and Confidentiality

- a. What materials will be used for the research process?** Include a description of both data collected through the study as well as other data accessed for the study. Copies of all data collection instruments must be attached and must include the title of the study.

During the interview, participants will be asked 10 questions(see attached document). The interview will be digitally recorded with permission of the participant, else notes will be taken, and later transcribed to an electronic text document to be included with the study. Once electronic recording or written notes have been transcribed, the recordings will be perminatly erased and written notes will be shredded and disposed of.

b. Describe procedures for maintaining the confidentiality of data.

Any confidential data related to the participants will be removed and not be included in the transcription of the interview from the digital files. The resulting data and conclusions will only be shared with the committee.

c. Who will have access to the data? If anyone outside the research team will have access to the data, provide a justification and include a disclaimer in consent documents.

Only the principle investigator will have access to the data.

d. Describe how and where research records will be stored. Note that all research-related records must be maintained for a period of three years from the study's completion and are subject to audit. Student research records must be maintained by the faculty advisor who identified in Section 1, Item 3 of this application or provided to the IRB for records maintenance.

Upon completion of the study, all research related records will be submitted to the faculty advisor Dr. Charles Hausman on an encrypted USB storage device to be maintained for the required time period of three years.

e. How will data be destroyed at the end of the records retention period (i.e., shredding paper documents, deleting electronic files, physically destroying audio/video recordings)?

At the end of the retention period, all research related electronic records will be deleted and the storage device physically destroyed.



Completion Date 30-Oct-2020
 Expiration Date 30-Oct-2023
 Record ID 36692884

This is to certify that:

Gwendolyn Davidson

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Curriculum Group)
Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Course Learner Group)
2 - Refresher Course (Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME. Do not use for TransCelebrate mutual recognition (see Completion Report).

Under requirements set by:

Eastern Kentucky University



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w0360bf8f-e59b-4ca1-b813-bfd8d56a743a-36692884

Gwendolyn Davidson

Study Title: A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE:
HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?

Email Recruiting Letter

Dear Online Faculty Member,

My name is Gwendolyn Davidson, and I am a student from the Doctor of Educational Leadership and Policy Program at Eastern Kentucky University. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study titled A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE? You are eligible to be in this study because you are an Online Faculty Member. I obtained your contact information from the college directory.

I would like to audio record your interview, and then I will use the information to complete my research about how community college faculty prepare to teach online. Your privacy is important to me, and for this study, your name and identity will be kept anonymous in the research.

Remember, participation entirely voluntary and at your convenience. You can choose to be in the study or not. Interviews are to be conducted by phone through February and March. To schedule a time to participate in an interview, please reply with a date and time that you will be available to do the interview.

You may also contact me by phone at 606-438-8408. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Gwendolyn Davidson

Gwendolyn Davidson

A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?

Research Questions:

1. Describe your background and experience teaching online?
2. What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?
3. What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?
4. Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.
5. How do you define quality online instruction?
6. Tell me about you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.
7. What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?
8. Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.
9. What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?
10. Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See [CITI Report](#) for details. See separate Transcript Report for more detailed quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Gwendolyn Davidson (ID: 6507580)
- Institution Affiliation: Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- Institution Email: gwedolyn_davidson@eku.edu
- Phone: 6064368408

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Researcher
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course

- Record ID: 24220095
- Completion Date: 19-Aug-2017
- Expiration Date: 18-Aug-2020
- Minimum Passing: 75
- Reported Score %: 87

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Statistics Research (ID: 1321)	17-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	19-Aug-2017	3/5 (60%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	19-Aug-2017	2/5 (40%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research and HIPAA Privacy Protections (ID: 14)	19-Aug-2017	3/5 (60%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	19-Aug-2017	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12908)	19-Aug-2017	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or has been a paid independent learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/2133528ca32-riad-494b-ae1e-814317ral4520-24220095

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
 Email: cuppon@citi-program.org
 Phone: 888-629-6929
 Web: <http://www.citiprogram.org>

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most recent quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- Name: Gwendolyn Davidson (ID: 6507580)
- Institution Affiliation: Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- Institution Email: gwendolyn_davidso6@eku.edu
- Phone: 6064363406

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course

- Record ID: 24220095
- Report Date: 12-Nov-2020
- Current Score**: 90

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Statistics Research (ID: 1321)	17-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research and HIPAA Privacy Protections (ID: 14)	19-Aug-2017	1/5 (20%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14926)	19-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	19-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12908)	30-Oct-2020	No Quiz
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	19-Aug-2017	4/4 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or has been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/213652ca32-f1ad-494b-ae1e-3437f1a14520-24220095

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
 Email: support@citiprogram.org
 Phone: 888-629-6929
 Web: <http://www.citiprogram.org>

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2 COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Charles Hausman (ID: 2015427)
- **Institution Affiliation:** Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- **Institution Email:** charles.hausman@EKU.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- **Phone:** 859-622-8250

- **Curriculum Group:** Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 2 - Refresher Course

- **Record ID:** 37045641
- **Completion Date:** 26-Oct-2020
- **Expiration Date:** 26-Oct-2023
- **Minimum Passing:** 75
- **Reported Score*:** 100

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
SBE Refresher 1 – Defining Research with Human Subjects (ID: 15029)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Privacy and Confidentiality (ID: 15035)	26-Oct-2020	4/4 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Assessing Risk (ID: 15034)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Research with Children (ID: 15036)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – International Research (ID: 15028)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – History and Ethical Principles (ID: 936)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Federal Regulations for Protecting Research Subjects (ID: 937)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Informed Consent (ID: 938)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Research with Prisoners (ID: 939)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 – Research in Educational Settings (ID: 940)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Instructions (ID: 943)	26-Oct-2020	No Quiz
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12908)	26-Oct-2020	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k847a6df0-ad24-45fa-87e0-8c68a1168b80-37045641

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)

Email: support@citiprogram.org

Phone: 888-529-5929

Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

**COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT****

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Charles Hausman (ID: 2015427)
- **Institution Affiliation:** Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- **Institution Email:** charles.hausman@EKU.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- **Phone:** 859-622-8250

- **Curriculum Group:** Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 2 - Refresher Course

- **Record ID:** 37045641
- **Report Date:** 26-Oct-2020
- **Current Score**:** 100

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
SBE Refresher 1 - Instructions (ID: 943)	26-Oct-2020	No Quiz
SBE Refresher 1 - History and Ethical Principles (ID: 936)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Federal Regulations for Protecting Research Subjects (ID: 937)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Defining Research with Human Subjects (ID: 15029)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Informed Consent (ID: 938)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Assessing Risk (ID: 15034)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Privacy and Confidentiality (ID: 15035)	26-Oct-2020	4/4 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Research with Prisoners (ID: 939)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Research with Children (ID: 15036)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - Research in Educational Settings (ID: 940)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
SBE Refresher 1 - International Research (ID: 15028)	26-Oct-2020	2/2 (100%)
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12908)	26-Oct-2020	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k847a6df0-ad24-45fa-87e0-8c68a1168b80-37045641

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
 Email: support@citiprogram.org
 Phone: 888-529-5929
 Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2 COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See the below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more detailed quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Charles Hartsman (ID: 2015427)
- Institution Affiliation: Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- Institution Email: charles.hartsman@EKU.edu
- Institution Unit: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- Phone: 859-622-8250

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Researcher
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course

- Record ID: 24396666
- Completion Date: 14-Sep-2017
- Expiration Date: 13-Sep-2020
- Minimum Passing: 75
- Reported Score*: 90

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Statistics in Research (ID: 1321)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	13-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	13-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research and HIPAA Privacy Protocols (ID: 14)	14-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	14-Sep-2017	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 1492)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12908)	14-Sep-2017	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/2/K7d5D9677-3325-4878-8165-cd51d2a32b95-24396666

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
 Email: support@citiprogram.org
 Phone: 858-629-6929
 Web: <http://www.citiprogram.org>

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

**COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT****

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most recent quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- Name: Charles Hartsman (ID: 2015427)
- Institution Affiliation: Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 1410)
- Institution Email: charles.hartsman@EKU.edu
- Institution Unit: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
- Phone: 859-622-8250

- Curriculum Group: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Course Learner Group: Same as Curriculum Group
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course

- Record ID: 24396666
- Report Date: 05-Nov-2020
- Current Score**: 90

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Statistics in Research (ID: 1321)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Belmont Report and Its Principles (ID: 1127)	28-Nov-2010	3/3 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	31-Aug-2017	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	13-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	13-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	13-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research and HIPAA Privacy Protections (ID: 116)	14-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14926)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	31-Aug-2017	4/5 (80%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	14-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Eastern Kentucky University (ID: 12903)	26-Oct-2020	No Quiz
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 453)	14-Sep-2017	4/4 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program (subscribing institution identified above) or has been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/24396666

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
 Email: info@citiprogram.org
 Phone: 888-629-6929
 Web: <http://www.citiprogram.org>

From: support@inforeadyreview.com on behalf of [Sponsored Programs](#)
To: [Davidson, Gwendolyn L.](#)
Cc: [Hausman, Charles](#); gldavidson@yahoo.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] IRB Exemption Approval Notification: Research Protocol Number #3668
Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:05:07 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

?Application Management

Hello Gwendolyn Davidson,

Congratulations! Using a limited review process, the Institutional Review Board at Eastern Kentucky University (FWA00003332) has approved your request for an exemption determination for your study entitled, "A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE?" This status is effective immediately and is valid for a period of three years as long as no changes are made to the study as outlined in your limited review application. If your study will continue beyond three years, you are required to reapply for exemption and receive approval from the IRB prior to continuing the study.

As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that all investigators and staff associated with this study meet the training requirements for conducting research involving human subjects and comply with applicable University policies and state and federal regulations. Please read through the remainder of this notification for specific details on these requirements.

Adverse Events: Any adverse or unexpected events that occur in conjunction with this study should be reported to the IRB immediately and must be reported within ten calendar days of the occurrence.

Changes to Approved Research Protocol: If changes to the approved research protocol become necessary, a [Protocol Revision Request](#) must be submitted for IRB review, and approval must be granted prior to the implementation of changes. If the proposed changes result in a change in your project's exempt status, you will be required to submit an application for expedited or full review and receive approval from the IRB prior to implementing changes to the study. Changes include, but are not limited to, those involving study personnel, subjects, recruitment materials and procedures, and data collection instruments and procedures.

Registration at ClinicalTrials.gov: If your study is classified as a

clinical trial, you may be required by the terms of an externally-sponsored award to register it at ClinicalTrials.gov. In addition, some medical journals require registration as a condition for publication. In the case of journals with membership in the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, clinical trials must be registered prior to enrolling subjects. It is important that investigators understand the requirements for specific journals in which they intend to publish. In the case of sponsored project awards, timeline requirements will vary for awards that require registration. Approved consent forms must be uploaded in the system for all Federally-funded clinical trials after subject enrollment has closed, but earlier registration is not required for all agencies. If you have questions about whether a sponsored project award requires registration and on what timeline, please send an email to tiffany.hamblin@eku.edu before beginning recruitment so that the specific terms of the award can be reviewed. If you have a need to register your study and do not have an account in the system, please send an email to lisa.royalty@eku.edu and request to have a user account created.

If you have questions about this approval or reporting requirements, contact the IRB administrator at lisa.royalty@eku.edu or 859-622-3636.

For your reference, comments that were submitted during the review process are included below. Any comments that do not accompany an “I approve” response have been provided to you previously and were addressed prior to the review process being completed.

[View Application](#)

Faculty Advisor Approval

Reviewer 1

Comments	Response
Reviewer Input: : Good luck with your study	I Approve

Reviewer 2

Comments	Response
Reviewer Input: : I approve.	I Approve

Reviewer 3

Comments	Response
Reviewer Input: :	I Approve
No Comments at this time.	
Department Chair Approval	
Reviewer 1	
Comments	Response
Reviewer Input: :	I Approve
Hi Gwendolyn,	
There are a few items you will need to address before this goes to the committee for review. I listed them below. Let me or Dr. Hausman know if you have any questions.	
Under 9c on page 21, you will need to include the parties who will have access to the data.	
The interview protocol needs to be updated to include opportunities for the participants to provide more elaborate/detailed responses. As it stands, three of the questions are YES/NO prompts. Instead of asking questions, open with "tell me about..."	
As this is framed as a phenomenological study, I looked for more information as to where this study fits within scholarly literature. Under 1a on page 8, you should include some references that you will use to situate this study.	
There are some grammatical errors in section 1a and the email recruiting letter. Please proof.	
IRB Review - Round 1	
Reviewer 1	
Comments	Response
Reviewer Input: :	I Approve

I approve

Appendix B
Email Recruiting Letter

Email Recruiting Letter

Dear Online Faculty Member,

My name is Gwendolyn Davidson, and I am a student in the Doctor of Educational Leadership and Policy Program at Eastern Kentucky University. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study titled A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING ONLINE TEACHING AT A RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: HOW DO FACULTY PREPARE TO TEACH ONLINE? You are eligible to be in this study because you are an Online Faculty Member. I obtained your contact information from the college directory.

I would like to audio record your interview, and then I will use the information to complete my research about how community college faculty prepare to teach online. Your privacy is important to me, and for this study, your name and identity will be kept anonymous in the research.

Remember, participation is entirely voluntary and at your convenience. You can choose to be in the study or not. Interviews are to be conducted by phone through February and March. To schedule a time to participate in an interview, please reply with a date and time that you will be available to do the interview.

You may also contact me by phone at 606-###-####. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Gwendolyn Davidson

Appendix C
Interview Questions

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. Describe your background and experience teaching online?
2. What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?
3. What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?
4. Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.
5. How do you define quality online instruction?
6. Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.
7. What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?
8. Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.
9. What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?
10. Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Appendix D
Interview Transcripts

Interview Transcripts

Interview Number: 01

Date of Interview: March 22, 2021

Participant 01 Profile: Assistant Professor, Humanities

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 01: I've been teaching online for about five years now, and I've taught every semester online since I started teaching, and that's my background.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 01: When I first started, they had us complete some kind of online training, and it was actually very difficult training. It really didn't help me with what I needed to be able to do to teach the classes I was going to teach online, so. When I first began, yeah, I took an online class and completed that training.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 01: So, one important thing that I learned about was to have the appropriate template that had all of the resources and tabs that we needed to have for students to be able to, you know, look at their grades and get help with Blackboard and find other resources in the college. I have that template now that I use in every course, and I edited it every semester to match, you know, the upcoming semester. I also started using online textbooks because I find that it's easier for students who are taking online classes to use a textbook that is also embedded in the course. It makes it easier for them to be able to do their work and their blackboard work at the same time.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 01: Well, I think that when you first start teaching online that you should probably have access to someone else's class so that you can view how someone else has created an online class, and that way, you kind of know what you need in your class to help your students be more successful.

Also, I think it would be helpful to have a mentor, someone that's taught online that you can ask questions to that will come and help you and even show you some of the different tools that you can use and the different ways that you can engage with students online.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 01: I think that quality online instruction is really about having the content that the students need to be delivered in a manner that is Helpful. It is delivered in a way where each student is able to learn the material, so you have different types of resources there available, like maybe lecture PowerPoint. You know you have things like reading visual, different methods, and ways to contact the student to be able to help them learn the way that they like to learn. I think that it has to be organized well. So those students are not confused, so it should go in order, like either by chapters or modules or weeks or something like that where it's easy, and the materials easily found. And then it's not cluttered as well. So, I don't think that you should add lots of stuff to the course is just because I think that everything that adds to the course should be part of the curriculum and helpful to the student.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 01: Each semester, I start out with a course, and I go through and make changes along the way, but I try to make sure that the course is clearly laid out for the student to where they're not confused. I create, you know, a video called a navigation video that shows the students where all the material is. Like the syllabus, my office hours, the bulk of the course content discussion board links how to complete a discussion board. You know it is just like a tutorial of how you can best navigate that system and be able to Finish the class and complete the assignments as they should.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 01: Well, I think you need basic computer skills. Well, I think you need basic computer skills. And we need to be able to use technology that allows you to meet with students virtually and then video equipment as well. I use Camtasia, but I also use some of the free online software like Screencast O Matic...to make videos. I have to keep track of students in different placements at things, so I create Excel sheets for that. I use Teams software, and then I also use Blackboard collaborate.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 01: Well, I think that depends on the change in technology that you have because sometimes it can really throw you for a loop if you've been using one way of connecting with students and then a new way is supposed to be implemented, then you

have to not only learn how to use it yourself, but you have to teach the students how to use it.

Another example, the bookstore system has changed how we select books, and it is not as friendly to use. But also, I think sometimes the technology gives us really cool ways of, you know, collecting data and information, but we often do the same work twice.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 01: I think that we probably just need to have more training. That's relative to what you actually need. So, if you have trouble with Doing virtual meetings or things like that, then then you would need, you know, training specific to that. I think it would be helpful for me is to see how other people teach online. That seemed to have, you know, good retention or good engagement and try to learn some of Their methods in ways that they connect with students.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 01: That would probably be my first semester ever. I kind of asked some people, you know... what do you do...and you know. There was really no answer to that question, and so I went, and did you know what I thought I was supposed to do. Is this what an online class was supposed to look like... you know, I ask someone. They said yeah, it looks fine to me. And then I find out that I'm missing certain things that should be put in an online class that no one had told me about. So, I was really lost in the beginning; I didn't, you know, know what was actually expected of me, but it would

have been better for someone to tell me this is what we expect you to put in your online class. These are just the basics, and you know, I didn't have that, so.

Interview Number: 02

Date of Interview: March 22, 2021

Participant 02 Profile: Assistant Professor, Health & Human Services

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 02: My background began probably Six years ago. I started teaching online. Since the beginning, I've learned a whole lot, but I feel like I have so much more to learn.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 02: I took the certification that was provided to me, a course made by the college.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 02: I do try to stick to the instructor's To-Do List that they provide on Blackboard, which is very beneficial because if I do stick to that, it does go through each step of everything I should do is just sometimes when you see the same thing over and over. You just kind of say, oh yeah, I did that... when really, you know I didn't title that right, or I didn't; activate that eBook appropriately, but I do try to start with implementing my syllabi and my calendars. I make sure that the points that I say are in the calendar and in my syllabi are what's actually in Blackboard because that would

drive me nuts as a student if it said there were 800 points, but on the total for the class, it shows 780 or something different than what it should show. I'm a numbers person, so that that has to match, and then due dates have to match. So, I say it's due in April. I don't have it listed for the fall semester in October, and I'm getting all of these ideas from when I was an online student, so I guess if I go back to that, I've really been online for about 11 years. If you count my experience as a student that anyway

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 02: I do have a process of doing different things, but I don't necessarily do it in any type of order. I know everybody has their own system, and I think some people have better systems than others because you know you will find classes where the due dates aren't right, or you'll see that nothing pulls up or the links or old or you know to see. I really would like to be able to have a better To-Do List for instructors and Blackboard to include to make sure all links are active to reduce the frustration for the student. That's the main thing.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 02: Well, one of the things is to make sure that you are meeting all of the goals that the class is supposed to reach. If it says that at the end of this class, you will be able to, then you need to make sure that they're able to do those things, because sometimes it's harder to demonstrate or to have a student demonstrate that they're capable of doing something when it's all online versus in person. And so, I've had to come up with creative ways to have students demonstrate Depending on what the technique maybe I'm. I'm a strong believer in Being able to apply what you learn. It's

great that students know on a test the different techniques or the different Criteria for selecting books, but I really want to see you doing that. I want to see you selecting books. I want you to tell me why you selected this book. I want to hear you read a story, so I do know that you've picked up all the points. So, you're applying what you've learned because anyone can sit down and memorize facts. And that's I. Just don't think that's as important as demonstrating.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 02: I talked more about how they present things to me, but I also want to be able to make sure that if I have a student who is a visual learner, that they're able to stay on track. Some students are more auditory summer, more kind of static, so I try to perform different activities Based on the different types of learning methods so that students can see it hear it touch it if that's what they need in order to learn it, and that's touching part is the part that they have to get out and do their observations in classrooms. And that's been a bit difficult just during COVID

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 02: it's important, and that's something that's a goal of mine. To learn one new, one new technology piece per semester, but I'd even be happy with it per year, so I can introduce it to the students because I think that we can sit and say that no online, this and no online that, but it's never going away. It's always going to be here, and when they get out into the job, they're going to have to know how to do this technology, and I think we're doing them a disservice if we don't include as much technology as possible

in our classes. My class, for instance, they do things like screen recordings. I try to use software that is free because they don't have the money to pay for these different types of things so, but for me personally, I want to be better at it.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 02: I was online. I mean, the whole program was online, so I didn't have to learn how to use one system or do one thing, and then it completely switches it around. I came into a program that was completely online, so I don't think I had as much trouble. What is frustrating is, it seems like about the time I learn a way to do something, then they'll change it on us. And I'm like, oh great; now I don't know-how. I'll have to learn how to do that, which that's what technology is. So, it's going to improve. I mean, it's so fast you know things improve and get better so fast. I mean, I think about the first computer I bought versus now. And it's just you're going to have to be able to keep up with that. And if you don't, you're doing yourself and your students a disservice.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 02: Just the stuff that people have been using for many years, probably getting students online at the same time. And if they can't come online, record it, I'm doing that, and that's the piece that I picked up last year. I'm doing better with that, But I want to be even better with it. I want to provide better skills and better instruction during that time I'm with my students because it's such a short amount of time. I'm still trying to get the hang of using the new learning management system.

I think instead of giving us choices of here; this is available, that's available, make it mandatory, you know, say here is. This is definitely what you need to do. You need to take this class in order to understand. I wish it in a way, and I know this is going to sound odd coming from an assistant professor, but I wish in a way that They would Evaluate more, evaluate my teaching online, and if I skip all of the training on let's say recording YouTube videos or whatever and then they don't see that I ever use it in my class. I think that would push me into, force me into learning it better and faster.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 02: Times that I tried to get all the students to come to live online class and some of them had difficulty getting on, that's probably the hardest part for me; it's hard for me to understand what they're seeing if they're having difficulty with getting on the teams meeting in or collaborate meeting. I try very hard to keep my technology people right there, And I'll say you need to put in a helpdesk ticket because I'm not very good at helping students online with online issues.

Interview Transcription

Interview Number: 03

Date of Interview: March 23, 2021

Participant 03 Profile: Professor, Health & Human Services

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 03: It was many years ago when online first evolved into transitioning from classroom to online teaching. I was one of the first that jumped on board to do a class or

two, an online format. I don't even remember a year, probably about 12 years ago.

Maybe it's when online started evolving. We had software known as web CT. An Angel was the LMS that was used at that time, and you basically just put your folders or lectures online; you created those.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 03: At the Community College, we do a lot of professional development training. We have academies that we go to that help us know what would make a quality online course. I've taken classes with other universities to see how they teach their online courses to see what they incorporate. If it's anything different, just to help with the classes as well. But the academies have really been big pushers on meeting guidelines for online

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 03: One thing that I do for a process is I actually look at my class from the beginning to the end in its entirety to see what I want the students to know a little different than going into a classroom. Usually, when we go into a question, we're focused on that one task, that one Lesson plan for that given day that given week, whereas on the online, I look at what I need to do the entire semester. So, I come up with a blueprint of what task I need to do what I need to accomplish, blooms taxonomy, are all the assignments hitting at a good level, so I just look at an overall process, not week by week...

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 03: I think we all always have room for improvement. Sometimes it's hard to focus it on that. The challenges that we have been facing with the pandemic have sometimes taken away from what can I do to improve this class and made it...What can I do to make sure the students have the needed materials that they need while they're trying to deal with all the changes? So, a little bit has changed on how you look at things this past year, and the focus has been a little different.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 03: I think quality online instruction is not a one-shoe-fits-all. It depends on the class. It actually depends on the group of students you have. You could have a quality online course that meets your competency's that's hitting Bloom's taxonomy levels. You're looking at varying Teaching strategies learning strategies on the student's part you're trying to hit. All of those areas So that each student will have the opportunity to learn at their level, their aptitude. So, trying to put in one thing I do see is hard. I do know that you know you try to use visuals; you tried to do auditory. You try to do the ones that you know can learn just by rating and grabbing. One of the big things I always say is you're an A(grade) student, may not have learned as much as your C(grade) student, so again, it's getting to know your students. Making sure all of those are incorporated into your online class, but not necessarily. Like I said, one shoe fits all. So, what may work one semester might not work the next semester, so it's ever-changing.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 03: I look at what is needed to be met in the competencies; I look at how I can meet those competencies. I do look at Bloom's taxonomy levels I look at. Is this going to be an easy assignment, or is it going to be analytical thinking? Is it going to be an application, or they're going to be researching there? So one thing that I do notice that I like with the LMS we use is it gives a grade level of the student work, so sometimes you can go in there and adjust some of your exercises or provide feedback based on the level of the student, not necessarily trying to hit like we used to and it before we had all this technology or you would go in, and you would try to reach your high end or low end and hope to grab the middle in there. But now we can actually get a visual. Again, we can apply that from every semester forward because each group of students is going to be different

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 03: Definitely anything with the email. We know the students already know how to use email. You need to be able to keep up with student's digital skills; for example, they will scan a document or take a screenshot with their phone to create a PDF. So, I do think students these days are advanced in digital skills just because of the technology they've grown up having.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 03: I think we do get used to the subtle changes, and we just go with it because it's not like a massive change. One thing I am struggling with on changing technology is when they say you just got to get in there and you've got to learn it. We're

in the process of transitioning from Blackboard Original to Blackboard Ultra, and the Gradebook, the Gradebook in Ultra is driving me crazy, so those changes, I think on that end with the grade book, it is a struggle because you're learning as the student learns, so it's like a real-time goal, and you just go along with it and just do a little at a time. I am in my later years, and one of the things that I remember is, when I first began teaching, and I would hear the experienced professors talk, they would say I can't keep up with the technology. In my mind, I was thinking it's not hard. It's not hard. Why can you not keep up with technology? Why can't you move that mouse? Why can't you send an email which was a simple thing to me, but it was hard for them. So now here I am, one of the outer generation professors, and I find myself with some of this technology they talk about. Oh my gosh, how do I do that? Whereas the younger ones are like, you don't know how to do that. So, it's true, the older you get, you do like some of those skills that the younger ones can use.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 03: I do think those professional development trainings have been wonderful. The academy that I went through. It was a week-long, it was massive, and it was back in the summer, so some of the things I learned, I forgot. But, having a support system that you can use has been wonderful, especially at our Community College we have. We have a wonderful support system, so anything that we can get on quick training that doesn't take much time. I have a little one thing with Ultra. Adding the Gradebook columns are a little different than the original, so having one little section on

how to add the columns to the grade book that might be a 10-minute PD that I can get in there and get out really quick, but it does not take my full day of what I'm doing.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 03: I think at the beginning of learning to teach online. I don't think any of us are fully prepared even today, especially this year with the pandemic. If we say that we are fully prepared to teach online, I think we are being overly confident. I think we have the skills that we need to teach online. I think we have the knowledge we need to teach online, but there's always something to improve that doesn't need to add more work, more steps to assignments, or anything like that, but just learning everything because with each new group brings a new set of skills you need, so it's just ever-changing. There's basically no way to get burnout teaching online because it's so different from semester to semester from week to week.

Interview Number: 04

Date of Interview: March 23, 2021

Participant 04 Profile: Professor, Sciences

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 04: I've been teaching online for 18 years.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 04: I had no formal training at all when we started. We used to basically talk to each other about Blackboard help each other try to get something squared away

and set up. Then I started watching some online webinars on online teaching that weren't directly related to Blackboard but sort of best practices. As far as formal training goes, I've had webinars, I've had our sessions at the college. Now there are training sessions for Blackboard. I've had a whole bunch of those.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 04: Basically, obviously, I've got to get my course online. Review the course, change dates, copy course content to new courses, deploy tests, announcements and make sure that my welcome statement and instructions are clear. It's just general cleanup and makes sure that everything is working, and since I adapt my classes and having your stuff put up each semester as the semester goes along and we interact

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 04: I can't think of anything at the moment.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 04: I can't, I simply can't I. I think that online instruction is totally different from in-person instruction. I think that getting students to Work with the material and be more active in their own learning is important, more so online obviously than it is in person. I don't know what is required and what will work online frankly, and I think that's probably going to be different for each instructor, And for each topic or course that's being taught, and I guess the only way you can do this by measuring the success, but I think our standards for success for an online class are way too low, And also not

very valid because we don't know who's been cheating and how they got the grades and all that stuff we just. There's not enough. We don't know enough about it yet.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 04: I think I'm not. I don't think I am prepared to deliver quality online instruction. I know that I try, and I try lots of different things, but the fact is that I don't think even my online courses are anywhere near as good as my in-person courses. I know what I'm doing in the classroom. I know the material I'm trying to teach. What is happening online, I don't believe, is teaching.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 04: I am not in a position to answer that because I don't have those skills, and I don't know really what's out there

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 04: it's very simple. As soon as I figure out how something is beginning to work. And I start to get confident that I can do a limited amount of stuff with the technology that I figured out how to use. They go and change it, so I'm always spending more time learning the technology than I am in applying it to my courses and improving my courses to simple as that.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 04: Resources, let's go with resources. I know that a lot of institutions have a course design. People who designed the online courses, in other words, put them online for folks. So, the instructor says I'd like to be able to do this, and then I'm course designer makes it happen online, and I think that's probably the most important thing. I don't think FACULTY should be struggling with the technology.

I don't think the way they teach their classes online should be limited by how much they know about the technology or how much time they have to spend learning the technology. I think that should all happened outside of the professor's scope. The professors are hired for their knowledge and expertise in their specific field and their interest in teaching that subject, and their ability to teach. The lack of knowledge about technology should not be an issue, and so someone else should be handling that, for instance, an instructional designer.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 04: Well, my whole career teaching online. I suppose at the first of my time teaching online; I tried to do group assignments. There were always student issues, or there was never anything produced by the group, so the whole thing was a total failure, and after two or three times, two or three semesters of trying, this group work, I gave up on it because it just it wasn't working.

Interview Transcription

Interview Number: 05

Date of Interview: March 23, 2021

Participant 05 Profile: Assistant Professor, Innovation & Educational Technology

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 05: OK, it's relatively short. Most of my experience has been recently in the past two and a half, three years, actually three years developing the curriculum and program and delivering the classes through that online modality of literally 100% this point.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 05: I am currently taking a course geared toward teaching online. I had PD sessions offered by the college, and they were somewhat helpful.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 05: Yeah, a lot of it to me, and this is a big thing in my life anyway, but time management. I literally put everything I do on the calendar. So, going through and transfer in the sites over doing cleanups, finding things that didn't work as well as the semester before, and updating to try to make it work a little better. As I learned, you know we're all evolving, so I do that type of stuff prior to classes, and I'm really fortunate because all of my classes are 12-week classes with the exception of 1 which is a six week, so it gives me the first part of the semester to critique and do a lot to get my class prepared and I've also had prepared new classes. I've had to prepare at least one, sometimes as many as two or three classes that are new, so that's been beneficial. What do I go through? I don't really have a regiment so much other than just what I was mentioned. The things I know I have to do, I go through and put them, so I don't get in a

crunch. To get up there, I like to get ahead of the game and then, you know, just in it to me mentally. It's easier to do it that way than to procrastinate, and I can be a procrastinator. I focus on not doing that.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 05: The only thing I mean if I really had to think about it, wish to have something that would give me the ability, it would be really good to have, uh, you know, to have a reasonable critique. I'd say this would be a big thing to help would be if I took classes myself online. Uh, at least once or twice a year to see how other people have developed a person what works and what doesn't work. It would give me something to compare and contrast. Instead of because I'm thinking it through on what I have been shown and then what I think would work for me, which you know may or may not. I'm a kind of static person, and I need examples, and I'm a visual person, but I try to provide multiple modes for them to learn. You know, audible, visual, and hands-on type stuff to do and reading. I'm a person who likes to read too. I think it could be critiqued and being able to critique other peoples would be beneficial.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 05: Well, I think number one is an. I've learned this the hard way is navigation number one. You need the students to be able to understand how to use what they're there to use. You can't learn if you've gotten if you're having issues navigating, and I had one class that I didn't that just did not work out well, and I've even pulled until I still totally redesign it. I figured out that I keep the students engaged and interested if

they do not have to learn Blackboard as much as they are having to learn or learning this silly way that I've laid it out.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 05: understanding how to provide useful content to the students. And then second, being able to find meaningful content to them to their learning styles are different than the Irish were from. We were in school because they have the option of learning differently. Sometimes it's difficult to tell if they're learning or not, so what I do is about 50% of my tests. I'm putting a lot more essay questions in because I can read what they are learning.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 05: I'm a digital person; I got my first computer when I was 13. I learn how to program in two languages. By the time I was 14, so I've always been involved with digital technology. The ability to be able to produce your own videos and to create your own graphics makes it easier for you to develop and prepare your quality online instruction.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 05: I think change just for the sake of changing this stupid, and I think that I think that change for improvement is really good, and it really depends on what type of technology change is current. I see some things that are pushed out that are mandated that are just they really cause more problems than they were sometimes but then

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 05: Good professional development is very critical. I'd like to have more tools.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 05: Yeah, absolutely the first time that I used Blackboard at the first time that I had to set up the classes in Blackboard

Interview Transcription

Interview Number: 06

Date of Interview: March 24, 2021

Participant 06 Profile: Professor, Innovation and Educational Technology

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 06: I have been an online instructor since the late 1990s, so I guess that puts me at about 23 years. I guess I've been teaching online. I taught in various platforms, from Canvas to Moodle, to Angel to the web CT to Blackboard. I've developed courses on nearly all of those platforms. I taught hundreds of online courses over that time period literally. I've also taught them from completely online to also hybrid.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 06: I've completed essentially a master's degree in instructional design and educational technology. I also have a background and computer information in web design development and database analysis. I've also taken additional courses on quality Assurance Methodology's on programming for educational method methods. I've also had training numerous trainings on how to construct and review quality courses.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 06: I don't typically use checklists per se. You know, uh, my methodology is more holistic. I start from the outside in if you will or inside out, depending on how you're perceptive of it. But I tend to look at it all from the standpoint of communication. I think the entire course is based upon that the same as I would regular in-person, face-to-face course. It's how I am going to be able to communicate with the students, what tools I will be using them to communicate with them, and then I look at the overall arching, you know, course competencies to how to communicate those tools and then match the particular tool with the competency in the mode of communication. We tend to shoot from the hip a lot of the time when it comes to course development.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 06: My preparation or design methodology really is more along the lines of adaptive. I tend to basically change depending on you know what occurs, instead of being fixated ongoing along with the course exactly how it's already been programmed out. I assess every day in the course.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 06: I define quality instruction by success rate. If we get a predominant statistically relevant version number and we can set that number of what we believe should pass a course, you know, typically, I'll look at about 75%. If I get 75% or higher on that course, then I'm going to consider the course design, if you will, to be successful.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 06: It goes back again to that adaptive process. You know, you're never going to know once again what works, so you're going to have to use your experience and use what you have gone through other trainings or whatever you have in your environment whatever you can bring in to make a determination that this approach is going to work for this particular assignment or this module or whatever. You go through it. If it's doesn't look like it's successful at that point, you have to make the alteration right then. OK, you have to be able to go through it and make that change, and so that that's where you have to accept, knowing that it's going to be altered in the course of the semester.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 06: The use of communication tools. Email and phone primarily because that's still the primary tool, any kind of skill with being able to do video production doesn't hurt because a lot of what we're doing nowadays is based more on video than it was on the strictly audio that we used to have from years past. Uh, but truly the skill that you have that most faculty have anyway is their voice and their ability to

communicate something. When you are teaching online, a lot of times, the physical nuances in the gestures and expressions that we show when we are teaching in person are not available online in that is something valuable to communicate in online learning, and I think we don't always recognize that part as being important, but we need to understand that people are sight-based creatures and when we look at things we are taking in more than just what you're saying. It's how you say it. It is your body language. There are a lot of things basically that play into this. And when you take that away where you're not having those the visual mode or that visual interaction with people, it can, I think, harm your course.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 06: I don't think technology is really what's driving my ability to prepare for the course. Technology is just like a whiteboard; it's the tool that I'm going to use. You know, as I said previously, the ones I'm looking for mostly at our communications tools. We've got an email. We've got a video. We've got voice calls. The packaging may change over the years, but really, at its core, there's still what they were 20 years ago. So, you know, in that respect. I'm still sticking with tried-and-true drills. I'm not really adopting anything really new.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 06: Honestly, I really can't think of anything because my background is broad in preparation for this sort of thing, where most FACULTY probably would not have been. So, I'm going to look at this from a layperson point of view, and I am going

to say once again, it's how to use the communication tools. You know communication is really big, and then, of course, it once again, it comes down to how do you basically plan out a course. You know, in the traditional face to face classes, you get to have your planning in very broad strokes where we're making bullet points If you will, and online, you basically have too many ways, and people want you to plan this course out farther ahead, but you don't have to. That's why I think it's going to come down to is not so much about what training, but it's what guidance is the college Department if you will overseas academics going to give us on saying how much should we be prepared to do in a chunk if you will, you know like two weeks out, four weeks out if you're in the K12 system, for instance, you usually release your teaching plans two weeks in advance. So, I think that would be a very good way to basically plan and get approved and get possible changes. I think another way is I'm a big fan of actually doing group teaching where we all get together and actually look at what. Hey, I've been thinking about doing this over the next two weeks. Can you take a look at this and tell me what you think? In your experience? How can I make this better as well? Getting feedback from students is awesome, and it's great, but students are going to be fickle, and they've got a different motivation than what we as faculty have. So, if you go to the faculty member and ask them to look at this and say, hey, what do you think? How can we basically improve our course? And if you get that group works together enough by default, you're going to get a methodology by which everybody is sort of following.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 06: I actually don't believe I have one; probably the closest I get to it was I have been sick or injured a couple of times. And I was not able to follow through with what I had planned at that point. In which kind of put which put me out for several weeks. Uh, but other than that, I really can't think. I mean, normally, the things we have to deal with online are like a loss of connection. Things like the Internet connections down, something doesn't work, which is out of our hands, so it's kind of nice. But once again, if you properly prepare, it's the same Boy Scout methodology, always be prepared if you prepare, you can have something in place to where people are able to work both online and offline, and I think that is something you need to consider is that when you have an online course, not everything needs to be online. You know a part of the course. It needs to be done offline as well.

Interview Transcription

Interview Number: 07

Date of Interview: March 25, 2021

Participant 07 Profile: Assistant Professor, Health & Human Services

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 07: At Community College, I've been teaching online in roughly a 7–8-month time period. So, it's a very short window, but I have a quick uptick. I learn pretty fast, a lot of stuff. So, my background includes some educational institutional level training as well as some outside professional experience. So prior to becoming a faculty member at the college, I worked in various professional institutions where I helped train, and many of those people were located in geographically dispersed areas, so we

had to make or create or use commercially available training systems to disseminate information across the geographic spans With teaching at the college level It's a very different experience than that of what I had in the professional world—teaching online in this institution. Having an LMS, that's readily available. Having all the assistive tools that you can use to create content that is available in a wide variety of formats, so for JDA compliance as an example also. Just the ubiquitous nature of being able to teach and post videos and recorded lectures and post assignments, and have everyone be able to access that when, where, however, they need to be really kind of very remarkable. So, teaching online from that perspective, with all the tools that we have at our discretion and, of course, having a modicum of being able to use those tools, can make online teaching. You know, I want to say 90-95% as effective in my opinion as face-to-face typesetting. So, I think that online teaching is really a very cool experience.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 07: Training sessions and professional development available for use at the Community College. I have read a couple of books pertaining to online learning. Specifically, since starting to teach online, so that's been a relatively short period, a couple of books about online teaching how to create effective online learning environments. And of course, you know, taking some feedback that you get from students about what they like, what they don't like.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 07: Some of those processes that consider or take into account feedback is the big one for me. So, I'd like to know what students think, what they're struggling with, what sort of issues that they might be having, is the material clear, do they have questions or concerns? So, I want them to reach out to me if they have questions or problems. So, one of the processes that I use is pretty much each week, if not every ten days or so, but several times throughout the semester, send out announcements and. Basically, just say, how are you doing? Do you have any questions? If you do, here's my email; shoot me an email, let's talk about it. Or here's my virtual calendar. Let's schedule a meeting so we can talk about it so that particular process. I'm trying to establish face to FaceTime in a virtual environment, so some sort of meeting or some sort of asynchronous communication like email to where students feel. Like they've got an advocate on their side, and I'm not just an instructor; I'm trying to help them with life. You know, the content in the material that I'm teaching in the course is great, but I feel remiss if I don't help them to become better in life in general. Regardless of whether that's, you know, getting in an A grade course, or if it's getting a B grade in the course or C or even a D, I feel like if I can impact them in a way that helps them throughout their life that that supersedes any kind of grade, they might receive in a course for me.

I try to make videos when applicable of actually me speaking, talking like a, you know a person.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 07: I'm sure there are always ways that you can improve anything, right? Because nothing is ever perfect, things always tend to change. New technologies come out.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 07: That can be a challenging thing to describe or define. But if you want to put it into something simple as possible, then I would say quality online instruction is when students are able to fully understand and comprehend and apply the concepts that you want them to understand and apply. So, quality online instruction can be any number of things I believe I was. I don't think the layout has as much to do with it, although data should probably be chunked into smaller pieces, which is a component I think of quality instruction. The course needs to have a smooth flow from start to finish. The things that you tell a student that you're going to teach them in one unit, they need to be able to fully comprehend and do by the end of that unit. If that doesn't happen, then you have to question whether or not it's quality because the whole point of the course is to teach them the competencies that they need to know to advance to either the next course, since that one may be a prerequisite or to advance them in their career and get them through college into their career. So, for me, I define quality online instruction. Did you tell them what you are going to teach them? Did you show them how you are going to teach them? Did you actually teach them, and do they understand what you talked about? That's kind of the easiest way I can break down what quality online instruction is to me.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 07: So, for me, in each unit, I design what we're going to cover in that unit; tell them these are the objectives that you should have and achieve by the end of the module. So, I expect them to be able to do the correlating assignments so that it reinforces what I told them they were going to be able to learn by the end of the module. So that alignment is kind of how I perceive quality.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 07: There are several that I think are important. Probably the most fundamental is being able to put something together within the LMS in a logical structural sense that flows and makes use of the platform. Apart from that, I think having the ability to use technology in general so. The digital skills that I think you have to have in order to deliver quality instruction, you have to know the technology that you expect your students to use to be able to show them how to use it. So, you have to have skills certainly more than what your students do in that respect. Because if you expect them to be able to send an email, you better be able to send an email. But if you expect to show them how to do that, you have to have skills that enable you to be able to record a session. So maybe you mess up or something during the lab session. Well, perhaps you need the skills to then go in, take the file, edit it, and turn it into something that looks a little more professional. So, for me, I think the digital skillset that you need for online instruction is, at a minimum, the skillset that you expect your students to have. On a better level, or I guess some more professional level, I would expect that you have the digital skillset that enables you to create professional-looking quality documents, images, videos, audio segments, PowerPoints, whatever presentation

materials you're using, I would expect you to have the skillset to make those look like they were done on a professional basis. So not taking something out of a textbook, scanning it, and then uploading it to the platform. I would consider that to not be very good digital skills.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 07: I love changes in technology. To be honest, I think that's pretty awesome. It seems like every time a new technology comes out it there may be some corks initially, but they tend to get better. Newer versions of Windows, for example, far surpass Windows 3.1, and so that's 30 years' worth of technology, basically. But each version tends to get better. This is an easy way to make things more user-friendly and improve things so, I really like tech, and I think tech, especially in an online setting if used properly, can help to get it to that threshold where it seems like it's more face to face.

There's a lot of technology out there, and I don't advise everyone trying to use all of it, but what I would like to say is good practice for someone who's teaching online is to pick the three, four of the five types of technologies that you are most comfortable with that can deliver the content you want to deliver and just be just get really good at it. And then when the changes happen within those technologies. Learn what changed, why it's changed, how it's changed, and if we can improve what you're doing, and in most cases, it probably will some way. It'll make it easier to do something; that's almost always the case with tech special with the software; it tends to get easier over time from what I've

seen. And that's with pretty much any tech, so I think changes in technology can make teaching online easier the majority of the time.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 07: So, for me, I'm learning some of those skills right now to actually become a little bit better prepared, so I think the LMS platform is a great place to start. Certainly, that is what we'd expect to be. Maybe the bare minimum, but if you want to create more interactive content, sometimes the LMS is a little limited. So, you need a couple of those different software's specifically articulate is a pretty good software suite that you can use to create immersive and engaging interactive content. Similarly, Camtasia is another type of software suite that you can use to make really good video content, like production quality, video content. I started using those in learning about them because I realized that having those skills having that training can help me to develop better content going forward. So, I think those two are important, but then it really broad scheme. I think any tool that you can use to help you engage more with your students and help them receive the help that they need.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 07: I would say day one because the first day that I was here, I had a class at 2:00 o'clock. So, get here at 8. I have a class at 2, So I think that was probably the first time I was not prepared. It was a hybrid model, so it was both being taught live and recording the session to be replayed for those who couldn't make the physical class and then, of course, physical students who were present in the classroom at the time. So that

was probably the most unprepared I've felt since then. I try not to feel that way anymore.

Interview Transcription

Interview Number: 08

Date of Interview: March 25, 2021

Participant 08 Profile: Instructor, Innovation & Educational Tech

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 08: My first experience teaching online was in fall 2017, around that time, and I was an adjunct at that point. I was just teaching one class online, and since then, I've evolved into a full-time faculty teaching primarily online for about a year now.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 08: I am currently part of a new faculty teaching institute, and I also went through an online teaching certification in the very beginning.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 08: I really try to take a look at what went well with one semester or what didn't work so well and try to improve that. I am still trying to work out my processes and policies each semester to build on them and improve them. I also, as far as preparing, review the competencies of each course and try to drill down more, and if the competency says that the student needs to discuss or explain, then they need to have a written assignment.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 08: M

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 08: I feel like the students need to feel that they are getting good interaction from their instructor and when at all possible, try to include this as much as I can. Depending on the circumstances, they should be getting that interaction with their classmates too, and it should be meaningful.

I feel like instructors should be fair & interact with their students.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 08: I really think about what's important for them to learn, what's coming up in that chapter or chapters that week and try to make it as interesting as possible. Post announcements that are timely and relevant to the topic being studied.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 08: Digital skills as a great one to include because ADA Compliance is super important, and I feel like faculty need to understand that, or at least Be willing to make your course ADA compliant. Make sure that you know who to go to help you with that. When it comes to advanced digital skills, I feel like I could potentially learn some of those digital skills, but that's where I also feel like it's very important for colleges to have Instructional designers because Those people have dedicated their Education their work is in making sure that the instruction is designed appropriately and

They have more of those digital skills than say someone like me and some faculty may not feel confident that they could learn those digital skills. Maybe their teaching load is so great that they feel like they don't have time to learn that, and so I feel like it's super important to have that support where instructors don't have the digital skills. Then you know your basic things like I guess I take for granted that everyone knows how to keep up with their email—other skills like how to create videos and use YouTube and caption videos for ADA Compliance.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 08: Changes in technology definitely impact my preparedness to teach online, including anything from new ways to link a book to my course or to have to learn something new before a semester is a challenge.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 08: It would be helpful to have training on planning a course and the assignments and getting to see someone else's class or perspective on it other than my own would be very helpful.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 08: The first live online classes. So, I had one class that was like a flex kind of thing where people could decide if they wanted to be on campus or if they wanted to join a live class online. I was trying to share a video, and they couldn't hear the sound, and I couldn't figure out what I was doing wrong. It turns out that I was just

using the wrong web browser, maybe because I do have that figured out now and then. When they have issues with their technology in a live online class, I feel like I don't know what to tell them to do besides go out and come back in and then see if it resolves their issue.

Interview Number: 09

Date of Interview: March 22, 2021

Participant 09 Profile: Lecturer, Science

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 09: I have been teaching fully online since 2019. I grew up around computers, and I mean, I was one of the first kids I know to have a computer. I had a computer when I was 4. So, I've always been around technology. I grew up with it. I was one of the first kids on my street to have AOL back when you had to pay per minute. I've always been very comfortable with technology and excited to use it really and to learn more about it, and in high school, I studied Photoshop one semester for art class. I did digital art. And then when I went to grad school, well, actually in undergrad, I took a what do they call it? The remote learning classes. And I would write papers and then Mail them snail Mail them to my professor, and he would grade them and snail-mail them back to me because I've moved out of state, and I needed one class to finish. And then, in grad school, I ended up taking More than one class online. After I got my degree, I decided to go back to school. So, when I went back to school, and I took a couple of online classes in grad school. So, I kind of got familiar with the student side of Blackboard and how everything worked that way, and then when I started teaching at the community college, it seemed like there weren't many people who were comfortable

at all using technology to teach, and I kind of got it, online classes, because nobody else wanted them. So, I kind of started teaching online just because I was comfortable with the technology and also OK teaching online, knowing that I had graduate-level classes online.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 09: Trial by fire. Especially in the beginning, there weren't a lot of resources for teaching online, and we have a lot of examples and resources now. I also go to conferences when and I attend free webinars. The most formal training that I had about how to teach online or what to do was through a book publisher teaching me how to use their content in my class.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 09: I always try to get my classes online and ready to go weeks before the semester starts. It doesn't always work out that way; for instance, this semester was really challenging for me because we're switching to Blackboard Ultra. So, I basically had to rebuild all of my classes because I didn't want to get stuck doing it on my two weeks before the summer session starts to break. So, what I usually do when we're not switching platforms or whatever you call that, I usually just edit assignments. Every semester I will take a look at that one specific assignment. So usually, what I do to prepare for future semesters happens during the present semester.

I read a lot of my textbooks when we get new additions, I check them out, and I spend some time reading through them. I don't always read every new textbook, but just stuff that interests me.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 09: I think that knew faculty or putting a new class online. I think that faculty should be given basically to be paid the semester before they teach it to prepare the class. That's one of the things that I liked about my first-class online was that they paid me to create my class, and at the time, I felt like my class was cutting edge. It was pretty awesome. Now it's you know. I mean, that was a few years, so now it's totally outdated, and I totally redid it this semester on my own time. But you know, at the time, it was cutting edge, and I spent. I was able to spend hundreds of hours creating the class and finding assignments and figuring every little detail out. I think that when Administration just thrusts faculty into an online environment and doesn't give them time to prepare that that's pretty much a recipe for disaster, and things just aren't going to go smoothly for anyone, and you're going to get lots of student complaints that way.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 09: I think quality online instruction revolves around being able to create a relationship with students, making them feel welcome that they can email me and ask questions, even if it's a dumb question and you know not to be afraid to communicate with me basically.

Quality online instruction does not have to take place synchronously. It's totally possible to build a relationship with students via email or other virtual forums.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 09: I like to use voice thread. I started using it because I thought the technology was really cool and had a lot of promise. And I still use it, but I always have issues every semester. I don't know if it's integration issues, but it seems like a lot of times, I can't get the voice thread to do what I want it to do. But I keep trying, and I keep trying to make it better and to use it more because I feel like that voice thread forum is a great way to asynchronously build relationships with students.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 09: I think more of us should know more about how to use Adobe products. I think that is going to be the key to the future—other skills like using email and creating digital video lectures. I think videos help students a lot because they feel like they're not solely relying on what they've read. And a lot of times when students read, I think, especially in science, they just get confused, and they don't really understand what they're reading. So, I think you know, just with creating. Videos and digital guidance really help students get through the material.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 09: Changes in technology are really tiring., always, like whenever there's an update, something isn't going to work right and it always creates, you know, some sort of little issue. So, changes in technology are good in the aspect that it keeps getting better, but when it causes issues, it can be stressful.

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 09: Yeah, I'm just going to reiterate that I feel like Administration should give us more time to create classes before we enroll students, and then it shouldn't be on me over my summer break to create a whole new class online.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 09: This semester, switching to a new learning management system because I didn't want to spend my summer vacation or my two weeks free before the summer break. To recreate all of my classes and put them in the new system. Because it's my understanding, and this may have changed, but it's my understanding that 100% of our classes are supposed to be in the new system for the fall semester. So, I was not fully prepared. That's a tight deadline

Participant 09 Additional Comments: I hope that the COVID and everybody putting all of their classes online has changed opinions about teaching online and what it means to teach online and how to do it better, but that it can be done well and efficiently, because like I said when I first started teaching online, there was a lot of pushback from that from other faculty that it can't be done and it can't be done well and that it's not really teaching and to me when I teach classes online, it takes so much more preparation. And, it takes so much more time grading than teaching an in-person class, because in person you know you've got, however many hours a week, you know, let's say 4 hours a week where you have to prepare a PowerPoint and notes and then maybe

like some guided learning activities, and you're done and teaching online is so much more than that because you have to have varied assignments or students get bored and you know they have to be at least a little interesting.

Interview Number: 10

Date of Interview: March 30, 2021

Participant 10 Profile: Assistant Professor, Health & Human Services

Researcher: Describe your background and experience teaching online?

Participant 10: I've been teaching at the college for four years. So, I would have to say that all of my experience teaching online has been within those four years.

Researcher: What kind of formal training have you completed to prepare yourself to teach online?

Participant 10: I did not complete any formal training. I don't know if what I was given when I started at the college would be considered formal training. I don't feel like that was. I feel like it was just like a review, but it actually wasn't how to teach online? It was how to create things online. It didn't really tell you how to teach it online.

Researcher: What are some of the processes that you have adopted and implemented to prepare to teach online each semester?

Participant 10: I wouldn't think it's much different from what an in-person professor would do. I choose my book, and then if it has a workbook, I review the book Workbook, see what would work best with the class when choosing. I tried to choose one that has options online that can do interactive learning. I feel like having some different varieties makes it a little bit better, but I feel like it's sort of the same way as if well. I mean, I teach in person too. I read the chapters, see what needs to be done to meet my goals, and all that stuff so.

Researcher: Tell me about how the process(es) for preparing to teach online could be improved.

Participant 10: I do feel like for anybody nowadays, even if they're going to college to be a teacher, and I think this pandemic shows that there should be classes included.

For new hires, the college could show them other classes, how they're set up, not just how to do it, but to see some classes actually physically. Maybe work with other professors in a mentoring program.

Researcher: How do you define quality online instruction?

Participant 10: I feel it quality online instruction keeps the student engaged, and then at the end of the class, they have processed what you've intended for them to receive, and you know it's like with any class you're going to have some students that don't care. In the end, you have built a course that meets those requirements that students will need to implement in the workplace are going further in their education.

Researcher: Tell me about how you are prepared to deliver quality online instruction that meets your definition of quality online instruction.

Participant 10: With online instruction, I think it's a little different versus in person because in person you sort of getting to know the student a little better because there you can sort of see, oh this is the type of student that doesn't bring that paper and pencil to class. Are you know this is a type of student forgets their books, you get their personalities a little bit more so for me to deliver quality online instructions, I have to be flexible to adjust to the students' needs as they send me questions and because the style of teaching may not, Even though they signed up for an online course, online courses are different delivery, I feel like you still have to sometimes be able to find a different way you give that information. I have, at times, you know, spoke to students by phone or whatever to go over the information that they comprehend better. I am also implementing videos for those that pick up on information better by listening versus those who do well reading. I like to put in some games and things like that; they're interactive and sort of fun, but at the same time learning. So, I think you have to have different ways of delivering that to make sure that they get that quality instruction that they understand that content at the end of the day.

Researcher: What digital skills do you perceive to be most helpful in preparing to deliver quality online instruction?

Participant 10: I think it's important to be able to create a video and staying up to date on new technologies with interactive components is also important.

Researcher: Tell me about how changes in technology impact your preparedness to teach online each semester.

Participant 10: Oh, it impacts it greatly. For instance, we're converting to a new learning management system. Well, it is really causing me to struggle this semester. It has slowed things down, and then the way I've done things, I've had to adjust because the new system doesn't have the capabilities that the previous system had. So, it can really slow you down and hinder things. And then on the flip side, if it's good, it's great, you know it, it can Excel it, but if it's bad or difficult or it can slow it down

Researcher: What skills, training, or resources do you feel would help you be more prepared to teach online in the future?

Participant 10: I think any type of training. I took a class over the summer that taught us about the learning management system; it was a boot camp. They really don't teach or have professional development classes on, preparing to teach online, how to pull all that together and make sure, and I think that when you look at those competencies, how do you build a course to meet those competencies to make sure that everything's met online, and it's delivered? Even though it's the same as if you were doing it in person, I think timelines are different as far as in-person and online. To meet that and make sure that you're not really just rushing the student or that you're just taking too much time.

Researcher: Tell me about an experience where you were not fully prepared to teach online.

Participant 10: It was my first class. I didn't know what I was doing or what to expect, and I didn't know that. When I first started, you know they had me view lots of videos out there. I think I had just a couple of weeks to learn, and You know that you're doing this stuff, and then it was all of a sudden, you are going to teach and then what you're going to build a class. I had no idea how to do that. I mean, those videos didn't show me how to do anything without the help of other faculty; I could have just put trash out there, my very first class I wasn't prepared, and nobody offered to help me navigate that really, it was like this is how you use the learning management system.

Appendix E

List of Tables

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Participants Profile	44
2 Define and Deliver Quality	51
3 Changes in Technology	54
4 Participant Experience	56

Appendix F

List of Figures

LIST OF Figures

Figure	Page
1 Data Analysis Framework	42
2 Types of Training	47
3 Faculty Processes and Suggestions	49
4 Important Digital Skills	53